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A Trip to Cashmere & Ladâk

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CAMP AT SRINAGAR.

A TRIP TO

CASHMERE AND LADÂK.

BY

COWLEY LAMBERT, F.R.G.S.

"Who has not heard of the Vale of Cashmere,
With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave,
Its temples, and grottoes, and fountains as clear
As the love-lighted eyes that hang over their wave?"

MOORE.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY

HUGH GURNEY BARCLAY, F.R.G.S.

HENRY S. KING & CO., LONDON.

1877.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE written this book at the suggestion of a few friends, from the very meagre notes jotted down in a small pocket diary.

While endeavouring as much as possible to mingle with my adventures any information which may be useful to travellers, I have at the same time tried to eliminate all the usual dryness of a "Guide." When I was preparing for my trip in 1874, I felt the want of a book from which I might gather some information as to the chances of sport in the particular countries I intended to visit; and I hope that in future that want may be provided for in this volume.

Doubtless, its shortcomings are numerous; but I venture to publish it, hoping that as the countries which are described in its pages are every year coming more and more into the favourable notice of sportsmen and travellers, this account may be not altogether without interest to the public, nor useless to any who may be tempted to follow my example and take "A Trip to Cashmere and Ladâk."

COWLEY LAMBERT.

New University Club, St. James's Street,
February, 1877.

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A TRIP TO CASHMERE AND LADÂK.

CHAPTER I.

FROM LONDON TO LAHORE.

Sporting Grounds—London to Bombay—India.

It is doubtless somewhat of a truism to remark that the love of travel and sport is inherent in every Englishman; and, such being the case, I might as well at once inform my readers that, finding myself with a few months on my hands, I set out for Cashmere. But before I speak of Cashmere, I wish to make one or two remarks on the hunting grounds of the world.

Sportsmen may be divided into two classes: those who make a business of sport, and those who simply seek it as a recreation. By the former I mean those men who, having no ties at home, no business to leave, and no reason for a hurried return, go out to the uttermost parts of the world, little caring if they ever come

back. They can choose their own ground, their own time, and their own way of living. They can live for the day, taking no heed for the morrow; and when, now and then, one of this kind of hunter perhaps sinks on the far prairie, overcome by cold and fatigue—perhaps lies under a tropical sun, struck down by African fever, or maybe falls a victim to an accident in the chase—when one of these disappears, his face is scarcely missed, for he had no ties at home.

But, on the other hand, a man who takes a sporting trip as a holiday has to look at it in a very different way. He has a few months only on his hands, he must be back by a certain time, he has ties at home, and he must not run needlessly into danger, for there would be broken hearts at home, perhaps, if he came back no more.

Where shall he go for his sporting trip?

Here is the map: Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. Europe is out of the question.

Africa? Certainly a very good hunting country, all the different kinds of big game a sportsman could wish for; but it takes such a long time to get to the shooting ground—it is so unhealthy—in fact, there are so many drawbacks to shooting in Africa, that very few men care to go there for a few months.

America? There, if a man want really good shooting, he must go right away into the back-woods, and then he has to run the chance of getting lost

altogether and never finding his way back to the old country.

No; I certainly think that if a man wants to go a trip for a few months to see new countries, to get good sport, and to return safe home again at the end of his holiday, that man should turn his back on Africa and America, and either spend his leave shooting in the jungles of Central India, or, what I consider a much wiser plan, go right away over the hills to the more unknown and far more healthy countries of Cashmere and Ladâk.

Thus reasoning, I determined on India, and started from Charing Cross in March, 1874.

If I go to Cashmere again, I shall certainly start earlier, as to get the best shooting in the Valley one ought to be there by the first week in March.

I was accompanied by three friends, Barclay, Cresswell, and Lydekker, whom, of course, I shall frequently have occasion to mention in these pages.

People speak of the "voyage to India" as though it were one of the most terrible undertakings in the world, whereas it really is a very pleasant, easy trip. Going by the overland route, it takes only nineteen days from London to Bombay, and the worst part of the journey is that by rail from Paris to Brindisi. For the rest, there are three days' pleasant steaming down to Alexandria, past the lovely little islands of the Greek Archipelago; then a night journey by rail across the Desert to Suez.

Then come five days' dreaming down the Red Sea. Of course, it has been known to be rough on the Red Sea; but I am simply writing my experiences, and they were of the pleasantest, warmest, and most dreamy kind. Then seven days more from Aden, and we find ourselves in India, so that the whole sea voyage is only fifteen days; and with pleasant companions and comfortable quarters it is quite possible to find it pass even too quickly.

On arriving at Bombay we only stayed two nights, and then left for Lahore, our baggage being sent after us by luggage-train.

We took out with us from England several things which we thought would be useful to us in camping in the hills; but I believe the only two articles that were really needed were a felt-covered water-bottle, with strap to sling on the back, and a pocket-filter, which I certainly found most useful on the march up to Cashmere.

I have put an Appendix at the end of this volume, with a list of the only things really worth taking out from England. Everything else can be bought in India.

We were obliged to remain at Lahore a few days while we prepared our camp for Cashmere, and as we had no introductions to people living there, we stayed at an hotel. Of course, I did not expect to find in Indian hotels the same comforts that one enjoys in those in England; but I certainly think that the hotels at Lahore beat any others I have ever been into for dirt

and discomfort. As a rule, a man travelling in India does not often have to stay at an hotel, as he either has introductions to people at each place he goes to, or the people with whom he is staying give him an introduction to some friend of theirs at the next place he intends to visit. I am sure residents in India are only too glad to see strangers, and know how to make them welcome. A traveller need never to be afraid of intruding anywhere, especially in the North-West.

I can mention a good custom, which, I believe, is still kept up in the hills. In some places a man has to ride thirty and forty miles from one house to another without passing a habitation of any kind; his friends, who are sending him on, mount him, giving him a fresh horse perhaps every ten miles; at the end of each stage he finds a groom holding not only his fresh horse, but a brandy and soda as well.

But now almost all places are being joined together by the encroachments of the railroad, and the old border hospitality is gradually becoming only a memory of the past.

Still, it is certainly not a thing to be groaned at when it brings within the reach of those in England such a lovely country as Cashmere. I have very little doubt that in a few years we shall have a railway running up the Valley of the Jhelam right into Srinagar, the capital of Cashmere. We should then get there in less than a week from Bombay, and in less than a month from London.

CHAPTER II.

FROM LAHORE TO SRINAGAR.

Making Camp—Servants—A "Dâk" Van—"Ekas"—At Bhimber—View of the Himalayas—Marching in the Hills—A Rhododendron Forest—A Jumpy Bridge—Poonch—The Economical Rajah—The Haji Pir—Ooree—The Valley of the Jhelam—Besieged by Boatmen and Shikarees—First View of the "Happy Valley"—Cashmere—Its Inhabitants—Up the Jhelam—A Cashmere Boat—The Woolar Lake—A Race—A Smaller Boat.

We had now arrived at our starting point for the hills, and it was necessary to purchase at Lahore all the requisites for forming a camp.

We began by getting four "hill" tents, each nine feet square, with double roofs. These are much the most useful tents for shooting purposes; they are very light, and with poles and ropes only form one coolie load.

The extra roof can be used or not, at pleasure; when it is used it comes down to the ground on each side. There is a space of about a foot between the two, so that in snow or rain the tent is kept perfectly dry by the outer roof, and in the hottest weather the sun fails to pierce them both.

The best camp-beds are made in Cashmere, but they may be now obtained at most of the hill stations. They consist of four legs, four poles which fit into the legs, and a leather sheet which straps across between the poles. This is by far the cheapest, most portable, and most comfortable bed I ever slept on.

We got folding-chairs, exactly the same as the "*croquet* chair" in England, and folding-tables; dishes, plates, cups and saucers, etc., of japanned-iron, brass basins for washing, with folding stands, cooking pots of iron, and, lastly, "kilters" to carry everything in; these are large wicker-baskets covered with leather, in form like a tub: the men in the hills carry them on their heads; in Cashmere they carry them on their backs. Thus our luggage consisted of tents, kilters, gun-cases, and a small, strong portmanteau of clothes each.

Any one going to Cashmere need take very few clothes with him, as a suit of strong cloth, adapted for shooting purposes, can be made from a pattern for about five rupees.

Our servants were four bearers, one of whom was also "Khansaman," or cook, two "bishtis," or water-carriers, and one "dhobi," or washerman.

The dhobi was an unnecessary appendage, and he was sent back from Cashmere, with some native merchants, soon after we arrived there.

Before starting for the hills, I should like to introduce my servant, without whom I am sure we

should not have had such a pleasant journey as we did enjoy.

He was a native of Cashmere and owned one of the best houses there. His father and brother were in the service of the Maharajah, and he himself had been a boatman, but was afterwards a servant, and at this time he was bearer to an officer at Lucknow, who, not being able to visit Cashmere this summer, had given him leave of absence to go and see his family at Srinagar. He, on his way up there, hearing of some "sahibs" from England at Lahore, came to see if he could get service with us. Now servants in India, when they leave a master, always get a "chit," or character, from him, which they carry about with them, either in a book or carefully wrapped up in an old piece of rag, and produce it when they seek another engagement. When I read this man's "chits" I had no hesitation in taking him as my bearer, and deem myself most fortunate in thus having met with Suddick, than whom there is no better servant in India.

There are several routes into Cashmere, and we determined to try one over the Pir Panjal, the grandest road as regards scenery. Although, as a rule, it is closed by snow till the beginning of May, yet we thought we might by chance get over in April, but, as will be seen further on, we were disappointed in this; however, knowing we could find out for certain as to the practicability of crossing the Pir at Thanna Mandi, two

marches from the foot of the pass, where another road branches off to Cashmere, we secured "dâks" and started for Gujrat. A "dâk" van is something like the common London "growler," rather larger, and without any glass, the sides being made to slide to and fro, so as to serve either as doors or windows. The "well" is boarded over, so that it is possible to lie down comfortably, and when we had put down coats and rugs enough to take the hardness off the boards, we—or perhaps I ought rather only to speak for myself, I—slept soundly for about six hours, when I was awoke by the shouting of coolies and others, who, I found, were endeavouring to lift the "dâk" bodily into a ferry-boat, to cross the river Chenab. I noticed the great railway bridge which is now building over the river here; I believe it is the longest bridge in existence, the length being about a mile and three quarters. At Gujrat the only vehicles procurable to take us to Bhimber were "eckas," and the consequence was, we had a ride which I think some of us will not easily forget.

I have come to the conclusion, after much careful consideration, that if I had a pet aversion—a human one I mean—I would like to send him for a drive in an "ecka" from Gujrat to Bhimber. It is quite the most refined torture ever invented.

An "ecka" consists principally of two high wheels, between which is a kind of open box, the posts at the corners sustaining a roof over-head about four feet

high; the bottom of the "box," where the passengers are supposed to recline at ease, is about three feet and a half square. This is supposed to carry two passengers and the driver, who generally sits on the edge of the front board, with his legs either on the horse's back or hanging down on either side of his tail. An "ecka," being entirely built of bamboo, is very springy, and as the road from Gujrat to Bhimber, ironically called the old Imperial road, is quite the worst carriage road I ever saw, our agonies may be better imagined than described. Barclay and I tried riding with our feet straight out on the horse's back; we squatted like natives, with our legs tucked under us; we hung our legs over the wheels, every now and then getting one nearly twisted off, but all to no purpose. When we fancied we were going to have a bit of smooth road, we suddenly came to a series of ruts, and we were tossed about, our heads banged against the top, and, in fact, bumped all over; now and then we crossed a dry river bed, into the sand of which the "eckas" sank till we thought they were going to disappear for ever. About half-way, we stopped near a village to bait the horses, and after waiting more than an hour for the drivers to return, we had to go and search for them. By the time we started again, it was quite dark, and we were obliged to go very slowly for fear of losing the road. Several times the drivers refused to go on, but by a little gentle persuasion we overcame their scruples.

At one place, while crossing a river, some of the baggage was shot into the stream, and we all got wet through in our endeavours to fish it out. At another place, one of the "eckas" turned a complete somersault down a small precipice, with our guns, etc., luckily without doing any serious damage. The tires came off most of the wheels, but such a slight and apparently common accident as that did not in the least disconcert the driver, as when one dropped in the road, generally tripping up the horse behind, the man just picked it up without a word, and tied it on to the back of his "ecka" with a piece of string. However, everything must have an end, and we finally arrived at our camp at Bhimber about one o'clock in the morning.

After a few hours' rest we began our marching at five o'clock, and soon found that we had a tolerably stiff walk before us. The road from India into Cashmere is divided into easy stages averaging about fourteen miles, and at the halting-places, which are generally situated just outside a village, there is a bungalow for the use of visitors, and a man whose duty it is to look after the comfort of travellers, get them anything they want in the way of fire-wood, and also to procure coolies for the carriage of their baggage.

The first stage of our march was from Bhimber to Saidabad, about fifteen miles, and consisted at first in fording two streams about twenty times—they were the

most perverse streams I ever met, always turning up again when we thought we had done with them for ever—and then climbing for about two hours up hills of smooth, steep rocks, with the sun blazing down upon us. All around us, however, were oleanders in full bloom, the beautiful red and white flowers forming a pleasant contrast to the smooth, black rocks over which the path led us. At length we arrived at the top of this first range of hills, and looked from the hot, parched plains of India behind us, to the cooler prospect of the snows of Cashmere before us in the distance. After crossing two or three little nullahs, we came to the top of the path which descends to the country generally called the hill country, and which divides the plain of the Punjaub from Cashmere. We stood in a little opening at the top of the pass, with rocks and trees on either side of us forming, as it were, a sort of frame to the picture which lay stretched out beneath us—a picture which I certainly think stands unsurpassed by anything I have seen, either before or since. We looked down on eight valleys, each, as it were, a little country of itself—each divided from its neighbours by a range of hills. The fields were green with growing corn, the orchards bright in all the glories of varied fruit blossom; villages were dotted about here and there; while in each valley a hundred silver streams ran bubbling and laughing through the meadows to join the river Tawi, which we could trace winding away into

RAJAORI, ON THE TAWI.

To face p. 12.

distance, and along the bank of which we knew our path lay for the next four or five days.

But to return to my picture. As I said, each valley was divided from the next by a range of hills, covered with trees and jungle; beyond the last valley rose the grand range of the Rutten Pir, black with pines, towering high above the nearer ranges of hills, and yet forming but a slight outwork to the glorious, impassable-looking, snowy boundary to the "Happy Valley."

Having gazed on the picture for a long time, down we went into the green fields; the path was steep in places, and took us among rocks and pines, which, I may mention, we found on the northern slopes of all the hills we crossed; and thus, when we were in the valley below, the scenery seemed to embrace several different countries: the fields of corn, the fruit blossom, and the soft air, seemed to tell us we were in England or France; the rice terraces, the birds of glorious plumage, reminded us we were in India; while above us were the pine forests of Switzerland or Norway.

Five days' marching took us to Thanna Mandi, where the road divides, one fork going off over the Pir Panjal, the other through Poonch and over the Haji Pir. The marching was very pleasant on those five days. Starting early, we generally got to our camping ground before the worst heat of the day. Most of our camps were in charming spots near the river, one—at Naoshera, I think—was in an orchard; it was so pleasant I should

have liked to have stayed there a few days. In the afternoon we used to shoot or fish, and vary these amusements by swimming in the river.

Sometimes the path led through lanes almost like those of Surrey, if one could exchange for the hawthorn hedge one of cactus covered with roses, jasmine, honeysuckle, and a dozen other flowers; thousands of birds were flying round us, while the jungle, which was too thick to penetrate for shooting purposes, seemed to be alive with peacocks, pheasants, and partridges.

Every day, as we got nearer Thanna Mandi, the valley became narrower, the river more rapid, and the mountains on each side higher, until at last we found ourselves at the head of the valley, just underneath the pine-covered ridge of the Rutten Pir.

We were told that the pass over the Pir Panjal would not be open for another three weeks, still Lydekker and I were anxious to try it, and so sent for the Thanadar, or head-man of the village, and questioned him concerning the practicability of crossing the pass. He assured us that there was not the slightest chance of our getting across, that we should be lost in the snow, and finally burst into tears and implored us not to risk our precious lives. We were considerably touched by the solicitude of this man, a stranger to us, and thought that it sprang from his innate kindness of heart; but we discovered that he was really more anxious for his own safety than for ours, as he informed us that if anything were to happen

to us, the Maharajah would remove his head for having allowed us to run into danger; and so, out of regard for his wife and family, we were at length prevailed upon to give up the idea of crossing the Pir Panjal, and took the Poonch road instead.

The next day we mounted the Rutten Pir by a very steep path. About half way up, the Pir Panjal road branches off to the right. When we reached the top of the first ridge we found there was a dip, or rather a basin, round the edge of which the path ran. We had been told that the Poonch route was the most difficult one, while the Pir Panjal road was the grandest. Not having been over the latter, of course I cannot tell how far this is true; but if there is any truth in it at all, then the Pir Panjal road must be very easy indeed, as on the Poonch road we never had the slightest difficulty at any time. The view from the top of the Pir Panjal may be much grander than the view from the Haji Pir, but I doubt if there is anything so lovely on the former road as that basin in the Rutten Pir I have just mentioned. Standing on either rim of the basin, we looked down on a forest of rhododendrons—not bushes such as we have in England, but great trees; and as we got there when they were in full bloom, the sight was glorious. Every shade of crimson was there, the colours not clashing one with the other, but all harmonizing in the most delicious manner; and walking through this beautiful valley, we found mingled with the rhododendrons other trees of various kinds, the

commonest being the Himalayan oak, while the ground was positively carpeted with violets, hyacinths, primulas, and ferns of endless variety. I never walked through such a perfect garden in my life. Down the other side of the ridge, into the Sooran valley, the path was very steep, but led through a beautiful glen, a mass of ferns and flowers, with the river tumbling along by the path and getting wider and wider as we got further down; the path at the bottom was quite level, and over grass most of the way. It was on this march that we crossed the first bridge in the hills. All the bridges are alike, so this one will do as a pattern; it merely consisted of two deodar trees laid from bank to bank, and pieces fixed across with wooden pegs. The bridges are very "jumpy," but seldom give way. I remember this bridge very well, as we had such a laugh there. Barclay was riding a pony, and coming to this bridge, he tried to stay his wild career by shouting "Wo! Wo!" Now, a native of those parts, when he wants his horse to go on, uses an expression something like "Wo! Wo!" and, *vice versâ*, when he wants to stop him, he uses the ejaculation generally written "Tchk! Tchk!" and so, seeing Barclay wanted to pull the pony up, the owner began Tchking as hard as he could, which had the effect of making Barclay shout "Wo!" all the louder, varying it now and then by turning round to swear at the man behind, who he thought was urging the pony on for fun. The pony came at the little gimcrack bridge full gallop,

but luckily pulled up just as he got on to it, or I am sure it would have come to grief; but what with the shouting and laughing and excitement, I shall always remember the first deodar bridge we crossed.

The next day we got to Poonch, which is the largest village on this route, and boasts a palace and a fort, as also a Rajah of its own, who is a tributary of the Maharajah of Jummoo. This Rajah, Moti Singh by name, is, I believe, a cousin of the Maharajah's, and came into the government of Poonch—at least, so I was told—in the following way. When the late Maharajah of Jummoo died and the present one took possession, a brother of Moti Singh's tried to make a disturbance and turn the Maharajah out, saying that he himself was the right man for the throne; he even tried to get the British Government to aid him, but they told him he must settle it with the Maharajah. While this was going on, the claimant died at Lahore, and the Maharajah made Moti Singh Rajah of Poonch, as a reward for not having joined his brother in his attempt to disturb him on his throne at Jummoo.

The palace and fort are small, and built of mud. When we visited the fort, during the afternoon, the garrison turned out to receive us, and the band (?) struck up "God Save the Queen," as they told us. We did not like to contradict them, but we differed in opinion. They afterwards tried another tune, a native tune, they said, but we thought it sounded something like a bad edition of "Annie Laurie," with variations.

We had not the pleasure of an interview with the Rajah, as he was away on a visit at Jummoo, but from one particular circumstance, which I carefully noted at the time, I should think that one of his chief characteristics was economy. And this characteristic showed itself to us in rather a peculiar form, namely, the soldiers' uniforms. There is very little doubt that the Rajah serves out his uniforms only half at a time, for all the soldiers we saw on the road, or loafing about the village, had on either a pair of brown trousers and no coat, or a brown coat and no trousers at all. I may be wrong in my surmises, and it may be only a kind of "military undress;" if so, I beg the Rajah's pardon.

The next day a double march, up-hill most of the way, took us to a village just under the Haji Pir. It was a wretched place for camping, and we had some difficulty in getting milk and eggs; at last, however, the "Kotwal" turned up from somewhere and promised to fetch us some milk, but as he did not come back, we had to hunt for him. He tried to bolt into the jungle, but we captured him, and having taken away his clothes, sent him again for milk, etc.; he soon brought us what we required, and got his clothes back. I found this plan answer admirably whenever the head man was uncivil or refused to get us what we wanted.

Next morning we crossed the Haji Pir. There was an easy walk of about a mile up the snow to the top of the

pass, where we got a view of the country round, and then we had about a mile through snow on the other side. We saw numbers of monkeys in the pine-trees—the large grey monkeys with long white beards called Langoors, whose skins are much prized for ladies' muffs, I believe. Below the snow, the path was very steep and rough. We had breakfast at a village about half-way down, and then went on, passing one of the finest waterfalls in Cashmere, and finally got to Ooree, where the road from Marri joins this one. That day's march was a hard one of about twenty-two miles over a very rough path. Ooree is a large village situated on a circular plateau, entirely surrounded by mountains, with the river Jhelam thundering along through a rocky gorge on its northern side. It boasts a fort, which, like most of the others in Cashmere, is apparently built of brown paper; it really is mud, but I believe if one were to throw a cricket-ball pretty hard at the wall, it would go right through.

The march next day from Ooree to Baramula is the longest on this route; but the road is a good one, and the scenery very pretty the whole way.

The valley of the Jhelam, through which the path runs, is very narrow. The hills on each side, rising to a great height, are covered with grand trees and lovely flowers, the deodars and Himalayan cedars being especially fine here; and the ever-increasing abundance of fruit trees gave us, as it were, a slight foretaste of what we might expect when we got into the Valley of Cashmere. The

country through which we had come on the other side of the pass seemed to be steeped in the warmth and fulness of summer, whilst along this valley everything showed the freshness of spring; the trees and banks were much greener, and the fruit trees—apples, pears, plums, peaches, apricots, and quinces—were just bursting into blossom.

Far below the path, the river Jhelam roared and tumbled over its rocky bed with a noise so loud that we had to shout to each other if we wanted to be heard. About half way we stopped for breakfast, at a very fine ruin of an old serai, or halting place, marking the time when the Mogul Emperors used the road in their visits to Cashmere. As we proceeded along the valley, it gradually opened out wider and wider, the hills decreased in height on each side of us, till at last we found ourselves among green fields, with the river Jhelam gliding along smoothly and quietly beside us, quite a different-looking river to the one boiling and roaring along a mile or two back. Our road now led through the Baramula Pass, which lies over a ridge about four hundred feet above the river. Here we were besieged by crowds of boatmen and shikarees, who swarmed round us, pressing on us their "chits," and pushing, shouting, and swearing at each other in the most awful manner. We tried to explain to them that we had already got hundreds of boats and shikarees, and did not think we should require any more just at present; but they followed us most persistently,

notwithstanding, evidently loth to believe us, or else perhaps not quite understanding our elegant mixture of bad English and worse Hindostanee. It is very strange how often one tries to make foreigners understand English by murdering it as much as possible. I think it is Mark Twain who gives such a very charming illustration of this; he tells how one of his companions, being pressed by a Frenchman to buy something in his shop in Paris, answered the man, "Allong, restay trankeel, may be ve coom Moonday."

But to return to Cashmere: we were soon at the top of the Baramula Pass, and gazed down on the "Happy Valley."

It was a wonderful sight.

At our feet was the Jhelam, now a broad river, winding along, past the pretty town of Sopoor in the half-distance, till it lost itself in the Woolar Lake beyond. Away in the far distance were the domes and spires of Srinagar, with the Fort and Tacht-i-Suliman standing out above the city. The whole valley was green with growing corn, and gay with fruit blossom—a beautiful picture, set in the frame of the snow-clad Himalayas.

Having now reached the Valley of Cashmere, I may as well at once give what appeared to me to be the chief characteristics of the country and of the people. I think the first thing one notices particularly, is the vast number of fruit trees growing wild everywhere, which, if a little care and attention were paid to them, might be made to

attain a high degree of excellence; as it is, they are indeed wild, growing some in the villages and some in the jungle, and the fruit they bear is for the most part devoid of flavour. Apples and pears, if they boast any flavour at all, savour very much of the turnip; peaches, apricots, and plums are for the most part small and tasteless; but there are many exceptions to this, and some of the orchards contain trees bearing fruit which it would be hard to excel in England, one peach orchard, belonging to a fakir on the Manasbal Lake, being particularly noted for its splendid fruit. Mulberry-trees abound everywhere, but the fruit is small. Walnut-trees abound; and, besides those I have named, there are quince, hazel-nut, a cherry, and, last of all, grapes of several kinds. They are very plentiful, especially around Srinagar; the vines there are trained up rows of poplars, and, besides bearing most excellent fruit, form a beautiful green screen against the hot summer sun.

Vegetables, too, grow in great abundance: potatoes, which I believe have only been introduced of late years; turnips, lettuces, cucumbers, tomatoes, banyans, and pumpkins. The cultivated land consists of fields of rice, which is the chief article of food amongst the natives; wheat, barley, millet, rye, and Indian corn. Tobacco and cotton are also grown, but only in small quantities. The trees and flowers of Cashmere are thoroughly English. I think one finds almost every tree in Cashmere that we have in England, with the exception

of the elm; but I remember, in the Sind Valley, passing five monster witch-elms, perhaps the largest I ever saw in my life, but I never saw another in any part of Cashmere. The principal tree of Cashmere, however, is the chenar, which really is the plane-tree, but grows to a much greater size in Cashmere than in England.

The slopes of the hills all round the valley, at least the northern slopes, are covered with forests of pines and deodars; the latter grow to an immense size, and are used for all building purposes, most of the houses being built entirely of deodar-wood; but I shall describe the houses further on. Of course, the chief blessing of the country, the reason of its great fertility, is the abundance of good water. Besides the many streams from the glaciers round the valley, there are springs of purest water flowing everywhere, not only rising in the mountains, but even in the centre of the valley itself. The principal springs are those which, rising in the eastern end of the valley, form the sources of the river Jhelam; the largest are the springs at Islamabad, an ancient city, a little over thirty miles from Srinagar, which I may describe in another place. I may mention here that there are also many mineral springs, some of which are very efficacious in peculiar diseases.

Thus, we may say of the country that the soil is rich, there is abundance of wood and water, there is considerable mineral wealth, and the climate is almost perfect. What more could be wanted to make this country one of the richest in the world?

Now, as to the people. I might sum them up in three words: filthy, ignorant, lying. There are, of course, a few exceptions to this rule, but they truly only prove the rule. Cashmerees have had a bad name for a long time, and I certainly think they deserve it. If there is one man in Cashmere more noted than another for his outrageous mendacity, it is the merchant of Srinagar. So much for the Cashmeree morally. Physically, the men are tall, well built, and mostly good-looking, many of them fair and ruddy, with light hair and blue eyes, though the greater part are very dark, and have a most unmistakable Jewish caste of face; at least, I speak of the Mahomedans: the Hindu is found occasionally with fair hair. The women of Cashmere have long been renowned for their beauty, but I think they are considerably overrated, with the exception of the punditanis, or wives of the pundits, the learned men of Cashmere; these women are really very beautiful, but as they always pull the corner of their head-dress over their face when they meet a European, it is very seldom one can get a glimpse of the Srinagar belles. The men and women dress very much alike. The men wear short baggy trousers, and a loose kind of smock frock reaching to the knees, fastened round the waist with a roll of cloth, all of which may have been originally white; but I never saw them other than a dirty grey. On their heads they wear a large turban, generally coming down lower on the right side of the head than on

the left. The women wear the same kind of smock-frock, but often coloured, and rather longer than the men's; on their heads they have a flat cloth cap. Their mode of dressing their hair is very peculiar: the hair, which is very black, as a rule, is drawn back and plaited together in eight or nine plaits; these plaits get smaller as they get lower down, and black woollen thread is plaited in, till they gradually taper away and join together near the ground, being finished off with a large tassel at the end.

The language is a mixture of several tongues; but I believe Persian predominates. In the hills round Cashmere there are so many different *patois*, that the inhabitants of villages about twenty miles distant from each other can hardly understand one another.

The houses are very picturesque, all built of wood—deodar-wood, as I said before; the trees are laid at right angles to each other, and the spaces between filled up with mud. They have pent-roofs, generally covered with grass and flowers; but whether the flowers grow in earth which has been laid on the thatch, or in the dirt which exudes from the interior, I am sure I cannot tell. There is no glass, so the windows are merely wooden lattices, pasted over with rather transparent paper in the winter.

I will now proceed with my journey.

From Baramula we went by water to Srinagar, up the Jhelam, across a bit of the Woolar Lake, and then up the river again to the city.

We had sent on the day before for boats, and found

them ready for us; but as our coolies with the baggage were some way behind, we inspected the place.

The town of Baramula is not a very large one, but boasts a fort, a good deal better looking than the brown-paper one at Ooree, and a very pretty bridge; the houses were four and five stories high, and the roofs were covered with flowers. The town is situated under a range of hills, and forms a very pretty picture from the bungalow on the opposite side of the river. In the cool of the evening we started on our trip up the Jhelam. The boats are about fifty feet long, and five and a half feet wide in the centre; they taper to a point at each end, are flat-bottomed, and are towed up stream and paddled down. Each boat is covered over with a matting made of grass, supported on a light wooden frame, to the sides of which are fixed blinds, which, being let down at night, make one as snug as possible. Two of us went in each boat, while a third one carried the servants, baggage, etc. We found room on each boat for two beds, a table, chairs, etc. In the after-part of the boat the boatman and his family live. The crew generally consists of four persons, two of whom tow the boat from the bank, a third steers, while the fourth either punts in the bows or does some cooking in the stern. Coming down stream the boat is allowed to drift along, occasionally aided by the crew paddling.

The luxury of lying in a boat and being towed up the broad, smooth river, with its glorious surroundings,

after ten days' moderately hard marching, may be easily imagined. That night we went as far as Sopoor, a town about the same size as Baramula, and slept there. Next morning we proceeded on our journey at daylight.

I awoke just as we were entering the Woolar Lake. The sun was rising over the mountain tops, and bathing the valley in a flood of golden light. Everything seemed to speak of peace and happiness: the little farm-houses, like wooden toys, perched on islands; the green fields and gay orchards; the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep and goats, the crowing and cackling of the domestic fowl, the clouds of ducks flying over our heads, the lake dotted all over with tiny fishing boats, and around the whole, the wonderful wall of snow. When I looked at this picture, I almost believed the tradition that this was the original Garden of Eden.

It was a glorious place for bathing; the water was as bright and cold in this lake as it is in the Dal Lake, near Srinagar, and that was perfect.

The Jhelam runs through the Woolar Lake, so that boats going from Sopoor to Srinagar leave the river close to Sopoor, and cross the eastern end of the lake, re-entering the river near the Lanka Island.

During the early part of the year, they say, there are often terrible storms on the lake, and the boatmen will never, on any account, attempt to cross in the night.

There are wonderful stories of wrecks on this placid-

looking lake, and tradition holds that the Emperor Ranjit Singh nearly lost his life in a storm on the Woolar.

Be that as it may, we found that our boatmen preferred to go up a canal which leaves the lake close to Sopoor, and, after winding through swamps and marshes, enters the Jhelam at Shadipore, about ten miles below Srinagar.

Later in the year the lake sinks very considerably, and boats are not able to get up this canal, and so are obliged to cross the lake, sometimes to their great discomfiture. On the swampy ground, which in April was covered by the lake, we found in September numerous little fishing villages, sprung up as if by magic. The inhabitants live by fishing, and gathering the "singhára," or water-nut; this they grind to flour and make "chapatties" of.

But the fish and the "singhára" are Royal property, like almost everything else in Cashmere, so that two-thirds of the products of the fisherman's labour goes to the Crown, and the other third is just about sufficient for him to live on.

During our trip up the river from Shadipore, our boat had a race with the boat of another traveller, in whose company we had come all the way from Saidabad. The men got wonderfully excited, and the shikarees and servants got out of their boats and got hold of the rope belonging to their respective masters' boat and hauled

away splendidly. I think we had as many as eleven men towing us along at one time, whilst I and one boatman assisted by punting, and Lydekker assisted by lying on his bed smoking and occasionally giving a shout of laughter as one of the towing men slipped and rolled down the bank into the river.

We very nearly had a *fracas* once, as our opponents' shikaree crept up behind my men, and seizing the rope, he was about to jerk the whole eleven into the water, when I gave a warning shout to Suddick, who turned round, and, seeing what was the matter, sent the sturdy little shikaree spinning down the bank with a pretty blow straight from the shoulder. The man soon scrambled up again, and seemed so inclined to "show fight," that Suddick, to cool the little man's ardour, took him up as though he had been a child, and pitched him well into the middle of the river, whence he was fished out half drowned. When we got to Srinagar he swore he would have Suddick up for trying to drown him, but on my representing to him that I should certainly have him up for trying to drown the whole of my men, he altered his mind and apologized instead.

Soon afterwards our rope broke, and the eleven men went down on their noses. Our opponents, being in too great haste to get past us in our difficulty, ran hard aground, and were seen no more till next day.

In the afternoon Lydekker and I left our large boat, and getting into the smaller one, together with Suddick,

we proceeded quickly up the river in order to find out where was the best place for a camp in Srinagar.

These smaller boats are just the same shape as the others; they are about thirty feet long, and four feet wide in the centre, and have an awning of matting over the centre part of the boat, under which we reclined on rugs and cushions.

The crew consists of six or eight men; eight is the best number, one in front and seven behind. They use a heart-shaped paddle, with a handle about three feet long, and make the boat travel at a very good pace.

These boats are used in Srinagar as the gondolas are used in Venice, for with the river, the lake, and the canals, one can go everywhere one wishes by water. We were now coming in sight of Srinagar, a description of which I think I may leave to another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE CITY OF THE SUN.

The Fort—A Cashmere Plot—The Tacht-i-Suliman—The City—A Srinagar Bridge—Canals—The Palace—The Visitors' Bungalows—Our Camp—The Trades of Srinagar—Dividing Camp.

The first thing that attracts the eye as one approaches Srinagar is the fort, standing in a very commanding position on the summit of a hill called the Harri Parbat, on the northern side of the city, and distant about two miles.

A stone wall encircles the hill below the fort itself, which wall, I believe, is over three miles in length. The wall and the fort were built by the Emperor Akber about A.D. 1591.

It is a fine, imposing-looking building at a distance, but I must say it is a most worthy example of the line that "Distance lends enchantment to the view."

It contains a few huts, a seedy Hindoo temple, a tank of dirty water, and a few brass guns, that are kept certainly more for ornament than use, as they would

indubitably burst if any one were foolish enough to load and attempt to fire them.

The fort was built to overawe the city in case of a revolution; a very necessary precaution, I should say, from what I have heard of the manners and customs of the natives whenever there is a new king.

There are generally three or four claimants to the throne on the demise of the reigning monarch, which, by-the-by, reminds me of a story told me of how, not long ago, a Maharajah's reign was nearly cut short soon after its commencement. This Maharajah had two brothers. When his father died, and he, being the eldest, took possession of the throne, his next brother suggested to some friends of his that they should put him out of the way, promising these four conspirators the chief places in the State when he became Maharajah. For four nights they conspired how to overthrow the Maharajah, when one of them, either tired of waiting for the grand crash, or else possessing a conscience (a thing hard to believe in a Cashmeree), turned round on his companions and told the Maharajah that his brother was plotting to kill him. He would not believe it; so the conscience-stricken one said, "Come and listen at the key-hole while I go in and talk with them."—"No you don't," says the Maharajah, fearing a trap; "I will not go, but my Wuzeer shall." And so, while the conspirators plotted, the Wuzeer listened at the door and heard

them settle to slay the Maharajah at his durbar next day.

The following day a company of soldiers was posted in the doorway of the palace where he held his durbar, and when the conspirators walked in they were promptly seized, bound with ropes, and brought before the Maharajah, who, as a warning to them not to try that kind of thing again, hung the three officers next day, and threw his brother into a cell in a fort near Jummoo, where, I believe, he languishes to this day; though why he has not escaped I cannot think, for if the fort where he is confined is like the others which I saw in Cashmere, he has only got to run his head up against the wall to find himself outside.

Above the city, and on the north-eastern side of it, is another and higher hill, known as the Tacht-i-Suliman, or the Throne of Solomon; on the summit of this hill is an old Buddhist temple, built, I believe, about 200 B.C. This hill is about 1000 feet above the city, and is a capital climb before breakfast, just to give one an appetite.

Now I will continue our journey up the river. First, we came to a few houses scattered along the banks of the river, all in a most ruinous state, and apparently ready to fall to pieces at a moment's notice; they are built of wood, as I have remarked, but a good many in the city of Srinagar are built of small loose bricks up to the first floor, and then are continued in wood.

The roofs of the houses are flat, and covered with grasses and flowers, amongst which tulips of all colours seem to predominate, and as we advanced up the river the city seemed to have quite a holiday appearance.

By degrees the houses were closer together and more numerous, till at length we found ourselves in the midst of a city of nearly 200,000 people, occupying a space about large enough for 50,000.

A short way through the city we came to the last bridge, of which there are seven, connecting the city on either side of the river. They are all exactly alike, so that a description of one will suffice.

Each bridge is supported on either two or three piers, these being made of trunks of deodar trees laid in layers of twenty, or twenty-five, each layer being at right angles to the next. Half way up the pier the trees used become longer and longer, so that each row projects beyond the one beneath, and the upper part of the pier then takes the form of a capital on the top of a pillar. Each pier has a triangular breakwater up-stream to protect it from the rush of water, which during the summer months is sometimes very great, as we once learnt to our cost.

The platform or roadway of the bridge is formed of trees laid lengthways, with short pieces pegged across; this is generally covered with earth, and makes an excellent road. Altogether, these bridges are certainly the most picturesque I have ever seen.

On each side of the river are seen the remains of what must once have been a splendid stone embankment. Many of the slabs of stone of which it is built show by their carving that they were taken from some of the grand old temples in Cashmere—ruins, perhaps, long before the embankment was thought of; and now the embankment itself is covered with moss and ivy, and is being slowly but surely washed away by the river.

Just above the last bridge the Kut-i-Kul canal enters the river on the left bank, and sometimes, if the stream is running very strong in the river, and the water is high enough in the canal, the boatmen prefer going that way to ascending the river, as they cannot tow their boats through the city; and sometimes the water is almost too deep for punting, so they are obliged to get up by means of their paddles only.

There is a very strange old wooden mosque on the right bank, just below the fifth bridge. It is the oldest mosque in Cashmere, and is supposed to be sacred to the memory of a fakir who introduced Mahomedanism into Cashmere; why it has not fallen yet I cannot make out.

Just below the fourth bridge is the tomb of the greatest of the Mahomedan kings of Cashmere. He is supposed to have introduced shawl-making into the country, and lived about 450 years ago. This tomb is the finest and best preserved in the city.

There is a very fine mosque on the right bank, just below the first bridge; it is all built of wood, and, I think, is the prettiest building in Srinagar.

The second bridge formerly had a row of shops on each side of it, after the style of old London Bridge; these were destroyed by fire in 1870.

Just above this bridge, on the right bank, is a good garden, with a fine broad flight of steps down to the river; on the other side the Kut-i-Kul canal rejoins the river, after passing through a very unpleasant and highly odorous portion of the city.

Opposite this canal is another one, the Sunt-i-Kul or Apple-tree canal; it is a great contrast to the Kut-i-Kul, as parts of it are as pretty as anything in Srinagar; it flows past the Chenar Bagh, and connects the river and the Dal Lake.

A little higher on the left bank is the city palace, which extends for about a quarter of a mile along the river. It consists of a number of different houses jumbled together, and contains a temple of the Maharajah's, the conical roof of which is covered with plates of gold. But the building, as a whole, is in quite as tumble-down a state as the rest of the "City of the Sun."

The first bridge is a little way above the palace, and above that, again, each bank is lined with poplars. A short distance further up the river is a large building erected by the Maharajah a few years ago for the purpose of dinners, balls, etc. He used to give dinners every

year to the English visitors during the season, and he built this place because he did not quite like the "Sahibs" singing "We won't go home till morning," in his city palace.

On the opposite side, a little further up stream, are the visitors' bungalows, extending for more than a mile along the river bank. They are mostly, especially the new ones, very comfortable houses, though few of them have any glass. They all have wooden lattice-work windows, which slide up and down; but, however pleasant they may be in summer, I should not care to stay in one in the winter time. Behind the bungalows are the camping grounds, but the best one by far is the Chenar Bagh, by the side of the Apple-tree canal.

We now, having got to our journey's end, proceeded to go ashore; but before I leave the boat I must say that the most curious and interesting sight I saw that day was the crowd of people at each landing-stage, or flight of steps, along the river—men, women, and children—washing either themselves, their clothes, or their pots and pans. It seemed to me as if half the city were thus occupied, and yet they are the dirtiest lot of people I have ever seen.

The first place an Englishman visits when away from home is, of course, the post-office; and accordingly we landed at it, among the bungalows on the river bank, and learning that our letters would not arrive till the next day, we went to find the best place to

pitch our tents in. The camping ground called the Harri Singh Bagh, near the post-office, was very wet, so we walked across to the Chenar Bagh, and there waited for the others to come with the baggage. They did not arrive till it was dark, and so we had to dine on the boats while the servants were pitching the tents. They seemed to do it by instinct, for it was almost too dark to see one another; but they made a very fair camp, and, the ground being level and dry, we were soon quite at home.

On emerging from our tents next morning, we found the camp thronged with tradespeople of every kind—the shawl-maker and banker, the jeweller and silversmith, the general merchant, the papier-mâché maker, the tailor, the gunsmith, the leather-worker, the skin-curer, the grocer, the baker, and numbers more, all fighting and shouting, pushing and struggling, till at last we were obliged to get our sticks out and teach them manners, afterwards pacifying them by promising to visit their shops in the bazaar. We left all our loose cash with one of the shawl-makers and bankers, and while drinking the tea served us, made with rose-water—rather nice, I thought—were of course prevailed on to buy a few shawls, table-cloths, etc. The real Cashmere shawl is loom-made and very expensive; this is owing to the heavy tax on all shawls manufactured, which forms one of the most important items in the Maharajah's revenue.

At one of the shawl factories which I visited, I saw a man working at a shawl which would be sold, they said, for 3000 rupees. These shawls are made in pieces about two feet square, and the pieces are then joined together. The man who was making this 3000 rupee shawl was working with about 500 spindles, and a boy was reading out the patterns to him as he worked. I was told that four rupees a month is high pay for a shawl-worker, and that it takes three years for one man to make a shawl. France takes most of the shawls; the great houses have an agent in Srinagar, a French gentleman who lives there all the year round.

I think, myself, that the hand-worked shawls are quite as pretty as the others, and they have the great advantage of being about ten times cheaper.

We went from the shawl merchant to the goldsmith, and looked at his things, but it was quite hard to find any native designs; the man had got hold of an illustrated catalogue of "Streeter's Machine-made Jewellery," and was busy copying all the old designs we had left behind us in England.

The gold-work is really the cheapest work to buy in Cashmere, as the work is good and the gold is pure; occasionally a smith tries to mix a little brass with his gold, but if he is detected he is punished very severely. I might warn visitors to Srinagar against one man, who tried this trick on a friend of mine; luckily he was found out in time, but I think that probably he was no worse

than his neighbours. He had unfortunately committed the most grievous sin of all—the sin of being found out; but, still, that is no reason why I should attempt to spoil his trade. He may have repented—who knows?

The silver and silver-gilt work is very pretty, but the gilt soon wears off the latter.

The great drawback to all this kind of work is, that they cannot make anything straight. If you want something made with three legs, you may be quite certain that the legs will not be the same length. If you want a serai, or claret jug, it is sure to lean on one side. And if they can possibly swindle you, they will. The papier-mâché is greatly admired in England. I think, myself, that it is quite as good as the French ware, while, besides the work being good and the colours bright, the patterns are highly original. They are very clever copyists, and will make anything, from a table to a snuff-box.

The copper-ware, tinned over, is both useful and ornamental, and for camp life nothing could be better. We always used cups, mugs, trays, muffineers, etc., made of this tinned copper.

But the best and cheapest articles in Cashmere are the clothes. Of course, every one knows what "pushmina" is—the beautiful soft cloth woven from the under fleece of the Tibetan goat. This is what the Cashmere shawls are made from, and not only shawls, but robes of all kinds are now being made from "pushmina."

There is another and coarser cloth, called "puttoo," which is excellently adapted not only for ladies' dresses, but also for gentlemen's shooting suits. It varies considerably in texture, but is very like what we call homespun. The strongest cloth, when turned into shooting suits, I really believe would never wear out, and in the rather finer cloth, a man can get a piece of navy blue which will make as good a yachting suit as he could get at home.

It does not matter in the least what the traveller wants—whether it is a Norfolk jacket, or a pair of knickerbockers, or, I believe, even an Ulster—all he has to do is to choose his cloth, give the tailor some English garments as patterns, and in a couple of days he gets an excellent suit for a price varying from nine to sixteen shillings, according to the quality of the cloth chosen. Boots, also, are capitally made from a pattern for four or five shillings a pair; the leather is not as good as our leather at home, but they last as long as anyone wants them to, in Cashmere.

The sportsman can always get his guns or rifles mended, the smiths being very clever; in fact, all the tradespeople in Srinagar are ingenious. They will swindle anyone if they can, but if a man only keep a sharp look-out he can get very good work done very cheaply.

After visiting all the respectable shops in Srinagar, we returned to camp and prepared for departure again

the next day. As we intended dividing into two parties, we had to divide also our camp fixings, cooking pots, etc., and also what stores we had brought up; and as some of these could not be divided, we had to toss for a pot of marmalade against a tin of sardines, and that kind of thing.

The next day Barclay and Cresswell went off to the east end of the valley, while Lydekker and I turned our faces to the west, to try our luck in Tilail.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM SRINAGAR TO TILAIL.

Floating down the River—Barasing Hunting—An Adventure after Ibex—First night I slept out—A Valley on a Mountain—The Pass of Rajdiangan—Sunrise—Over the Snow—Two Bears—Another Pass—A Snow Pipe—Glissading—How Lydekker came to Grief—The Valley of Tilail.

It certainly is very pleasant to lie on a comfortable bed in a flat-bottomed boat and to float down the river; it is just in this way that one could imagine an idle man would like to glide smoothly and quietly down the stream of Life.

Thus we floated down the Apple-tree canal, entering the river opposite the palace, then down through the city. There was a good deal of water in the river, and we went pretty fast down stream; towards evening it began to rain heavily, so we ran up a small ditch between high banks close to the village of Pattan, which is about fifteen miles from Srinagar, and having let down the matting on each side, and made ourselves as snug as possible, we defied the rain and spent a most comfortable night.

It rained nearly the whole of the way to Bandipore, next day; but clearing a little in the evening, we left the boats and pitched our tents at a village about three miles from the lake.

We were now on the north-eastern side of the Woolar Lake, opposite to Sopoor, where we entered the lake on coming into Cashmere, and we seemed to be just underneath the mountains over which the path leads to Astor and Gilghit, which was our road to the Tilail Valley.

We were told the snow was very deep on this road, and so we determined to wait for a few days up a valley to the east of Bandipore, where there was a good chance of getting an ibex or barasing.

The barasing is the stag of Cashmere, very like a red deer, but as a rule larger; *bara-sing*, I believe, means twelve points, hence the name.

On the following day we moved our camp about eight miles up this valley, and pitched it near a village called Suntmoola. In the afternoon I sighted a small herd of barasing with one fine stag. The river was between us, and my shikarêe and I had to lie in a wet prickly bush for an hour and a half before we could stir; at last they moved behind a hill and we crossed the river, up to our waists, and after climbing for another hour, peeped round the hill and found they had moved about a mile further on. As it was getting dark, we had to leave them and return to camp. By the time we reached the river it was quite dark, and we could not find the place where

we crossed before; however, we held on to each other and managed to get across again, though the stream was frightfully strong.

We then had a walk of about five miles in the dark, tumbling over trees and rocks, and expecting every moment to walk into the arms of one of the numerous bears with which the forest abounds there. However, I got to the camp at last, and found Lydekker had been after a bear in another direction, but, like myself, had failed to find him.

The next day I had a little adventure, which I will proceed to narrate.

Lydekker went after the bear he had seen the day before, and I ascended the hills which rose behind our tents after ibex, which had been sighted by a villager on the previous evening. Just below the snow we saw the ibex, nine of them, one a splendid fellow, feeding on a patch of grass among the rocks opposite. I was separated from them by a gorge filled with snow; but saw that, if they fed downwards, I could get a shot at them across the snow, by crawling down my side of the gorge. After waiting for four hours they began to move down, and I did the same under the cover of rocks and a few pines. I had just got within shot, and was preparing to fire at the big one—such a beauty!—when a man jumped out from among the rocks beneath me and went hooping and halloing down the snow. Of course, the ibex were off like a shot, and never stopped till they were out of

sight. How my shikarees did swear! They implored me to shoot the man; they spat at him, and called him all the worst names they could think of. I was considerably annoyed; but, not wishing to have his blood on my head by shooting him, I contented myself with heaving rocks at him as he slid down the snow, which rocks, luckily for his wife and family, and for the peace of my soul, did not hit him.

Having had a pipe, I felt better, and proceeded to return to camp, when, about half-way down, there sat a black bear on the other side of the gorge, sucking his paws, evidently to his great gratification. Again I was just raising my rifle, when down gallops that wretched man over the snow, and off goes the bear, as Americans say, "like greased lightning." I *was* angry, and my shikarees absolutely foamed at the mouth with rage.

I found out afterwards that this was a man who wanted to be my "second shikaree," a day or two before; but I said he looked bad-tempered and dirty, and would not have him, and thus he revenged himself on me. I offered a reward to any one who would bring him to me; but his hut was shut up, and he had gone on a visit to some friends, and thus saved himself sore bones.

The next day I went after the ibex again, climbed to the top of the ridge over the snow, into a pine forest the other side, but could find no traces of the ibex. There were lots of fresh bear tracks, but we did not see an animal all day. It was glorious up there: a carpet

of snow under the huge pine-trees, and a stillness only broken now and then by the cry of the Monál pheasant. I could not get back to camp, and so made a bed of pine boughs in a nice little hollow, free from snow, and having rolled myself up in my "kummel," endeavoured to lose myself in pleasant dreams.

Everything inclined to sleep: splendid air, a bright fire, the moon shining through the boughs above, the stillness of the whole scene, the feeling of one's littleness in the world, and yet I could not get to sleep. I think I was kept awake by fleas.

Finding the ibex had gone right away, we went back to Bandipore next day, and then on towards the pass for Tilail. From Krealpore it is a good climb to Tragabund, which is the name of a little valley in the pine forest, just under the pass of Rajdiangan; there is only one hut there, by the side of a little frozen lake. We cleared a space from snow for our tent, and preferred that to the hut, which looked rather nice at a distance—at a long distance, I may say. We had a splendid fire in the evening, and I think that was one of the most charming camps we had anywhere. It was so odd, finding a little round valley like that so high up in the snow on the side of a mountain.

Next morning we started at half-past three, by moonlight, for a big march; and after a tremendous climb up snow which in some places was so perpendicular that we had to make steps in it and walk up, like going up a

ladder, we arrived at the highest point, 11,950 feet, just as the sun began to rise.

I believe there is nothing more glorious to see in the world than the sun rising over the snow.

As we stood on the top of Rajdiangan, we had a view which was only surpassed in extent by one we had afterwards from the top of Kuneri, near Lé.

To the north of us was the range bounding Astor and Gilghit, and to the south the whole Vale of Cashmere lay spread out at our feet.

On the right of the valley was the snow-clad range of the Pir Panjal, and on the left the range separating us from Dras and Ladâk, while apparently quite close to us rose Haramook, to the height of 16,500 feet.

And as we stood there, breathing the keen fresh air, came the sun, first touching the tops of Pir Panjal, and gradually, one by one, all the peaks changed from white to gold, till the whole range on the right of us was bathed in the rosy light of early morn; then, as the sun himself appeared in all his glory over the side of Haramook, the snow round about us sparkled as if with joy to welcome him again.

But we must get on. We were soon glad of our veils and spectacles, for the glare was dreadful.

We crossed some grand snow-fields, *glissaded* down some fine slopes, and stopped for breakfast in a little valley half-way down the other side of the pass. At half-past ten we got to Kusselwund, a hut by the side of the

river Kishen Gunga, having marched twenty-two miles over snow in six hours, allowing an hour for stopping on the way.

We had to clear the snow away for our tent again, and kept big fires going all day to dry the ground.

The coolies, with our tents, etc., came in about six in the evening, two of them being led in snow-blind.

We gave them some oil for their eyes, and next day they were better.

From here to Goorais the path leads up the Kishen Gunga, the rocks on both sides of the river being very grand; in some parts the cliffs are quite perpendicular for nearly a thousand feet, and on every little ledge where there was room, a pine-tree had found a resting place. We saw two splendid bears on the other side of the river; one we might have shot, but we could not have crossed the river for some miles, and he would probably have fallen from the rocks into the water and have been washed right away.

Gradually this gorge opens out into a broad valley covered with snow. Here and there a field was clear round a village; but the sheep had not been let out of the houses yet. During the winter the flocks form part of the family in the villagers' huts, and they are so frightfully thin when they are first let out, that one positively could not make a dinner of a whole sheep.

From Goorais to Soorowan is an uninteresting walk of about nine miles along the river, and when we camped

here we saw on the other side of the river the ridge which separated us from the Tilail Valley. During the night we had a very heavy storm of rain, which soaked our tents to such a degree that we could not start till nine o'clock next morning. We then crossed the river, and, passing through the village of Soorowan, proceeded up a nullah directly at the back of it, and soon got on to the snow again. We then had to climb the steepest bit of snow-wall I ever saw in my life. The snow was very soft after the fall of the previous night, and we sank over our knees at every step; but my head shikaree, making a zigzag path, with his huge feet, enabled us to tread in his footsteps, and so saved us the trouble of making holes for ourselves. At last we reached the summit of the pass, and found the ridge so sharp that we could look down on our footsteps behind on the one side and the snow slope into Tilail on the other.

Have you ever heard of a pipe made of snow before? I should not have believed it, if I had not seen it myself. We sat down to rest at the top of the ridge, and pulled our pipes out to have a whiff before going on. One of our shikarees asked for some tobacco, and then, having made a good hard snowball, he pushed a piece of stick into the centre, and another piece at right angles to meet it, thus making a draught through, and then, putting a piece of tobacco in at one hole, he lit it and sucked away at the other hole, getting six or eight good whiffs before the pipe melted or fell to pieces. Each of the shikarees

followed his example, and it was intensely amusing to see how they helped each other to make the pipe and light it, and how they laughed if the pipe came to sudden grief at the first whiff. The slope down into Tilail was quite as steep as the one we had mounted from the other side; in fact, it was almost like the side of a house. The shikarees, as soon as we were ready to proceed, taking our rifles in front of them and keeping their feet well together, lay down on their backs. Two started first, and shouting "Jaldi ow, Sahib," away they went as straight as two poles, getting smaller and smaller, till they looked like flying specs in the distance. Then another went after them, then a fourth, till we found we were being left behind, so at last I sat down, and saying "Come along, old Dick," off I went, very slowly at first, using my climbing stock as a drag behind, and then faster and faster as I got more confidence. Presently I heard a shout behind me, and down came Lydekker, shrieking with laughter; his pole had left him and taken a line of its own, his legs were getting wider and wider apart, till at last he was overbalanced, and turning over, went bounding away, over and over, sometimes his head in the snow, sometimes his feet, sometimes rolling along on his side, sometimes flying down head first, till at last he bounded into a drift and stuck fast.

I hurried down after him, and found him, nearly buried in the snow, still laughing, and luckily quite unhurt. Finding a pine-tree close by, we broke two

branches off, and sitting on them, holding the thick end between our legs, proceeded the rest of the way at a more sedate speed. We arrived at the foot of the slope in about fifteen minutes, over a distance that took us an hour and a half to climb in the morning.

At the end of the slope we found a narrow gorge, half filled in with snow, under which we could hear a torrent rumbling along, and following this torrent we at last came at right-angles into the Valley of Tilail.

CHAPTER V.

SHOOTING IN THE TILAIL VALLEY.

Meeting Friends—The Thanadar—Stalking a Bear—On Bears generally—My First Shot at a Bear—An Old Saw—Another Bear Stalk—My First Kill—Bears at Play—How we kept the Queen's Birthday—Grass Shoes—Ibex—A Narrow Escape.

The river Kishen Gunga was once more flowing past us, but not such a big river as it was where we had left it the other side of the pass. In front of us, a little on our right, is a valley with steep hills on either side, and a stream rushing down the centre and falling into the Kishen Gunga. This valley is the Lahun Nullah; it runs parallel to the Tilail Valley (a high ridge dividing them) for about fourteen miles, when it is closed by a mass of mountains of which Remino is the chief.

The Tilail Valley branches off a little to the left, and the path leads along the river through the entire valley.

After walking about four miles along the river, we came to a small village, where the "Lumbadar" came out and salaamed us, giving us a note directed to any one coming into Tilail; it was from two men shooting a few

miles further on, and contained an invitation to dinner, which we were not slow to accept. Our hosts were camping at Pitrani Tilail, the chief village of the valley, at the mouth of the largest nullah, called the Satani Nullah. We found a good fire going, and were soon made at home by our friends, one in the R. A. and the other in the 89th Regiment, with whom I spent many a pleasant hour afterwards.

Our coolies did not arrive till nearly eight o'clock, so we stayed there the night, and walked to the next village in the morning. At Jurnial we cleared a space above the village, which consisted of three huts, and having pitched our tents, we retired into private life for three days, during which it rained incessantly. One afternoon my shikaree crept in to say there was a big bird flying round the village. I went out with my gun and found it was a golden eagle; so, hiding myself, I bided my time till he came close to me, when I gave him a charge of No. 3 shot, which simply rattled off his feathers as if they had been made of iron. After that I went back to my tent and made some cartridges, mixing tallow with the shot to bind them together, and found No. 3 more useful then.

The next morning the Thanadar, chief officer of the Tilail district, came to pay his respects. He was a fine, dark, handsome man, with a beautifully curled moustache and pleasing manners. He wore a coat of bright chintz, lined and trimmed with sheep-skin, trowsers of a

brighter and louder pattern, and over all a long scarlet cloak, beautifully embroidered with gold.

He was polite, put the whole valley at our disposal, and said he would see that we should want for nothing, after which he took his leave.

The first fine morning, our khánsámán and bishtí having just recovered from rather a sharp attack of fever, we moved our camp across the river to the end of the Badagam Nullah, about four miles further up. As soon as we were comfortably settled on a piece of sward by the side of the stream which comes down the nullah, the Thanadar again turned up, to see if we were in need of anything, and brought us a present of a sheep and six pounds of dried apricots, which were promptly turned into excellent jam by our khánsámán. In the afternoon I went up to view the nullah, and about two miles up saw a bear and cub on the opposite hills. We promptly scrambled down our side of the nullah, crossed the snow over the stream at the bottom, and then proceeded to stalk the old bear up the other side. These red bears are very keen-scented beasts; their hearing also is very sharp, but their sight is bad, so that if one can only approach them on good ground, and get the wind of them, they seldom escape, if one holds straight. But the greatest care has to be used, on account of the continual changing of the wind. I noticed that up all the nullahs in Cashmere, more particularly in those of the Tilail Valley, the wind went

round and round in the most extraordinary manner; so that if the wind was bad for stalking when you first sighted game, you had only to wait half an hour or so, and it was certain to change. The maxim which every one dins in the ear of a beginner is, never approach a bear from beneath. This is all very well, but I certainly think I shot as many bears from below them as I did from above. It is often an impossibility to get above them, and even if it is possible, you run the risk of being winded by them from half the points in the compass while you are getting round them in order to get above. Another thing is, that a bear, when shot at, will nine times out of ten rush away *up*hill, and as they travel almost as fast uphill as they do down, unless you can reload very quickly and stop them coming up, they are not unlikely to disturb your equanimity considerably.

The greatest danger one has to face in shooting bears is incurred when one follows a wounded bear uphill, because they are very cunning beasts, and will hide among rocks till you are close beneath them, and then positively heave the loose rocks down on your head. One of Suddick's former masters had a very narrow escape once in this way.

He had wounded a bear and tracked it over the snow till he got among some rocks rising like a wall in front of him; up these he followed the stains of blood, which were quite fresh, and he kept looking up

and listening, but he could neither see nor hear anything of the bear, till, just as he got to a piece of rock rising quite perpendicularly before him, a few stones came down, and he looked up just in time to see the rocks above him sliding down, and as he crouched against the wall, some huge rocks came flying by him and went bounding away down below, closely followed by the bear himself, who, he supposed, had overbalanced himself while loosening these rocks in his endeavour to crush him. The bear, being stunned by his fall, fell an easy prey to the sportsman's rifle.

But to return to my bear with the cub. We crawled up a gully full of snow, till we thought we were opposite the little plateau on which they were feeding, and then, creeping quietly up the rocks at our side, peeped over the edge, only to see the bears sniffing away about half a mile further up, they having evidently winded us soon after we started. It was no use following them, so we scrambled down the rocks again on to the snow, when a terrible rumbling above caused us to look up the valley, just in time to see a huge avalanche of snow sliding down on the top of us. The manner in which we rushed up those rocks for the second time would have astonished any bear that happened to be looking on; we had not to climb down the rocks again, for the avalanche had nearly filled the gully up, and we just walked on the top of it as soon as it had settled down comfortably.

It was getting dusk when we got to the stream again, so we hurried campwards; but about a mile from our tents we sighted two bears a little way up the hill-side. They were feeding upwards, so we scrambled after them as fast as we could, and as soon as I got within range I lay down and fired at the biggest. The light was very bad and I hit him too high, but he roared like a bull and then turned and rushed down at us. We just had time to step behind a rock when he came grunting and growling past us; we followed him down, and met him returning, having evidently altered his mind when he got to the bottom, for he was travelling up home as fast as he could. I could not get a fair shot at him, it was so dark, but I blazed away, and by the growl I should think I hit him again, but he only went on a little faster than before, and we lost him in the dark.

We then set out for home, rather disgusted with our day's work, and had an awful walk through the dark. We went along the snow over the stream, but now and then we came to a great black gulf where the snow had tumbled in, and there was the torrent roaring along below us; then we had to scramble up the bank on one side or the other; at last we got back to camp very tired and, as I said before, rather disgusted with our first day's bear-shooting.

On Sunday our friends from the Satani Nullah came over to spend the day with us. We always kept Sunday as a day of rest, and enjoyed it accordingly; and after

a pleasant, quiet day in camp, we walked back on the road to Satani with them, when I saw for the first time an exemplification of a very old saw.

All this country abounds in various kinds of pigeons, and naturally they formed no uncommon item in our daily bill of fare. The most common bird, however, is the hooded crow, and they positively swarm everywhere. As we were walking along, we saw some pigeons feeding on the ground in the midst of numbers of these hooded crows. One of my friends said to the youth who was carrying his gun, "Let me see you shoot a pigeon." The boy strutted toward the unconscious birds, anxious to show off before his fellows, and just as he got near them they all rose in a body; he raised the gun, singled out a nice fat pigeon, blazed away, and down came a hooded crow, amidst shouts of laughter, thus exemplifying the old proverb, and showing how "he shot at the pigeon and hit the crow."

We always started after "shikar" as early as possible, generally before sunrise, and I found that between the hours of 4.30 and 7.30 the bears came down very low, and the light was good for shooting. My next day with the bears was in a nullah about four miles up the river from Badagam, which rejoices in the euphonious name of Buillunder.

I had a very long shot soon after I entered the nullah, and hit the bear hard; but he had so great a start that I never caught him up, and he got right away,

leaving much blood behind him. Then I had a shot at a musk-deer; but, as I had not seen one before, and they are very difficult to shoot, I missed him altogether.

Then, after a long rest, I went on again, and at last came on two bears feeding together. My shikaree stalked them very well, and I had a left and right shot. I killed with my left, and only just touched the other with my right, and he got away. The one I shot was not quite dead when we got to him, and he growled and snapped at us in a most unpleasant way, but he was too far gone to move, and cold steel finished him.

The weather about this time was as perfect as one could possibly wish for: the climate was bracing cold, morning and evening, rather hot in the middle of the day. For two or three days there was not a cloud to be seen, and the sky was so blue that the much-vaunted Italian sky would positively have looked grey beside it. The snow was disappearing fast, and celery and all kinds of bulbs were pushing their way through in their anxiety to greet the sun.

These red bears are especially fond of the young celery, and when we found a patch pushing through the snow of an evening, we knew it was a sure find for bears the next day.

I again tried the Badagam Nullah, and got a very good musk-deer. In the evening, while on my way campwards, I saw a bear and cub high up on the hill on

the opposite side of the nullah. The wind was bad, so we sat down and waited, and while we were there we were intensely interested and amused at the pranks these two bears played. They were rolling over each other, and rushing round and round just like two kittens, and at last the old bear got on to the snow in a gully opposite us, and began scratching away like a dog at a rabbit hole, till at last she had dug a regular pit in the snow; she then took the cub by the scruff of the neck, quietly dropped him in, and then ran away and hid.

Every now and then the little fellow's head appeared for a moment, as he scrambled up to the top and then slipped back; but at last he managed to get out, and then went rolling away to find the old one, and then they had another tumble in the snow; and by this time the wind, which had been gradually getting round, was blowing straight down the nullah, and the old bear, who had been continually sniffing away in the most discontented manner, seemed at last to be perfectly satisfied, and proceeded leisurely downwards towards a nice piece of celery we had noticed with our glasses before.

We then proceeded to crawl up to meet her, and after a little trouble I got a nice shot and killed her at once. We then chased the cub, who ran away howling like a puppy—in fact, like several puppies; but he was too quick for us, and we could not catch him.

There was a glorious lunar halo about this time, which we observed two or three nights in succession; it generally lasted for about an hour. The colours were bright yellow round the moon, with outer rings of red, blue, and green, very bright indeed.

Soon after this we moved our camp back to Satani Nullah, and were joined by our two friends who had entertained us there before.

One of them had had a very good week, bagging five bears and six musk-deer; he also brought in a bear-cub alive, and it caused us some amusement by the sulky manner in which it received our kind offers of refreshments.

The next day being the 24th May, and a Sunday, we determined to keep her Majesty the Queen's birthday in a due and proper manner.

After a little trouble we managed to hoist a flag, consisting of a red silk pocket-handkerchief, a white ditto, and a blue sun-veil; these being stitched together made an excellent tricolour. At twelve o'clock we fired a salute with guns, rifles, and revolvers, and in the evening we had a grand dinner, the combined effort of our united khánsámáns. After dinner we sat round our camp fire, and having made all our servants and coolies, to the number of fifty odd, arrange themselves in a semicircle on the opposite side of the fire, with the villagers, who turned out to a man, behind them, our friend in the R. A., who was an excellent Hindos-

tanee scholar, made a speech. He informed them that it was the birthday of our Queen, the Queen of England and Hindostan, and that we were going to drink her health and wish her long life and happiness.

Every man had provided himself with two torches of pine, which they here lighted at the fire and held up in each hand. We then drank the Queen's health and gave three cheers, which were speedily drowned by the most unearthly shouts of the natives;—before I parted from my men I taught them to cheer pretty fairly. However, they were good, honest shouts of pleasure, even if they were rather discordant. As soon as they were quiet I sang "God Save the Queen," my companions joining in the chorus, and the natives listening with much wonder, apparently. As soon as we sat down, with one accord they burst into a chant, which one man led, and in which they all joined. I was not a sufficiently good scholar to understand their strange mixture of Persian, Hindostanee, and a few other languages of the East, but now and then a word struck familiarly on my ear, and S., of the R. A., who is an exceedingly good Indian scholar, told me that the subject of the chant was the Rose of Cashmere, and how they pray for it to grow over one's head, etc.

The leader sang two lines in a terrible monotone, and then they all shouted the chorus together. There was something rather grand in the song, as they seemed so very earnest about it.

From the few words that I caught, I should think that the song might go something like this:

Hail to the Rose of Cashmere!
The Rose of the Peri!
Hail to the Rose!
May thy life be as soft as the petals,
And ever sweet-scented!
Hail to the Rose!
May its branches be over thy head
And shield thee from danger!
Hail to the Rose!
Ever spreading around thee,
Keep thee from harm.
Hail to the Rose!

I don't pretend for a moment that the foregoing is a translation of what they sung; there may not be a word, except "rose," that would appear in the original. I only wish to show the sort of verse that a Cashmeree delights in chanting. Most of the Cashmere songs are rather like Gregorian chants; but there are some, sung chiefly by the Nautch-girls and boatmen, that one can almost trace a kind of French melody in.

It was really a most striking scene, and would have made a lovely picture. Ourselves in the foreground; the blazing pine-logs; beyond the fire a ring of black faces—no, not black, but very dark—with their shining eyes and glistening teeth; and behind them, again, a crowd of villagers—men, women, and children; the flaring torches, the quaint dresses; and for a background, the village itself, with its half-dozen wooden houses;

behind the village, the pine-forests stretching away on either side, and above the pine-trees, the glorious snow fields; the whole lighted up by the brightest of moons. Would not that make a picture? Then we had a splendid display of fireworks, consisting of a "devil" made of powder and salt. This was followed by a grand though impromptu concert; a little rum loosened their tongues, and we had some excellent songs, Suddick being far the best performer, and singing all the Cashmere boat songs, one after another. The orchestra, which was really very effective, consisted of a penny whistle, a tom-tom, and a brass basin. We did not retire to rest till ten o'clock, very late for us.

The next day our friends left us, as their leave was up, and they had to return to India. They had had good sport altogether, though not very successful with the ibex, although G. of the 89th had shot one of forty-nine inches, which, I believe, was about the best of the year. He shot this one up the Satani Nullah; so when he left it, I went up to try my luck there. For two days I saw no signs of ibex. Each day, as I went farther up the nullah, I found it grander and more difficult to get along. The rocks at the bottom prevented us walking along the river, so we had to go along the side of the hills above, which are very steep; and I found this walking along a slope all day very trying to the ankles, especially as I was wearing snow shoes made of grass. These shoes are made by the coolies. They first make

a thin rope by twisting dried grass together; with this they then plait sufficient for the sole of the shoe, leaving loops at each side and a long piece of rope at the end. This end rope goes between the great toe and the next one, and passing through the side-loops, laces up like a boot, finishing with a double turn round the ankle. Woollen stockings and leather socks to go over them, each with a great toe separate, like the thumb of a glove, are made in Srinagar, and with a grass shoe over these, one can hardly slip either on ice, snow, or smooth rocks, even if one were to try to do so. The coolies always carry a supply of this grass rope with them, and can make a pair of these shoes in about half an hour. They were rather uncomfortable at first, but I got to like them afterwards, and found them quite invaluable, with the exception of the time that I was on the slopes of the Satani Nullah, when I wanted the support to my ankles only to be found in a good pair of laced boots.

The wind was very bad up this nullah, and though I saw "shikar" every day, I did not get a shot for four days. I had no tent with me, so slept under a rock; but being disgusted with my bad luck, on the fourth day I returned to the end of the nullah and camped by the village of Pitrani Tilail.

I had one little adventure up this nullah which I must recount, to show how difficult it sometimes is to get a shot at an ibex.

The ibex is the boldest and most active of the goat

species; it frequents the highest and most inaccessible mountain pinnacles, it feeds along the edges of the deepest precipices, and leaps with ease across the most fearful chasms. In height it stands about three feet six inches. The hair, which is very long and thick, with an undercoat of a white woolly substance, is of a yellowish grey colour. The chin of the male is bearded, and the horns, which are amongst the greatest trophies in a sportsman's collection, curve boldly over the back, their upper or anterior surface presenting a series of regular protuberances or partial rings, which get smaller and smaller towards the end of the horn, which consists of a smooth, fine point. I believe the longest pair of horns ever shot in Cashmere were fifty-four inches, but anything over forty-five inches is considered very good. The females have much smaller horns, generally not exceeding eighteen inches in length.

These animals are seen in herds of from five to fifteen or twenty, and there is seldom more than one large head in the herd, the strongest male having beaten off the others.

They are very playful and wonderfully active. I remember Lydekker telling me one day he had seen five ibex across the river, going along the brink of a precipice, where the path was so narrow that they were obliged to march in single file, and yet they were amusing themselves by trying to push each other over the edge.

I had been out one morning from four till eight, without seeing anything, when, as I was eating my breakfast, an ibex appeared standing on a dizzy pinnacle, far away on the other side of the river. He looked like a statue of immense size, standing out against the blue sky, and his horns seem to reach back to his tail. He stood motionless for twenty minutes, when, being satisfied that nothing was near him, he lay down, and we could just see the top of the curve of his horns. I set off immediately with my two shikarees, and having crossed the river on the snow, found a convenient nullah, which apparently ran up behind the point he was on.

It took us nearly two hours to reach the top of the nullah, up a snow slope quite as steep as the one we mounted coming up from Soorowan to Tilail. At last we got above the ibex, and proceeded cautiously down towards the rock he was on. We had to cross a bit of snow not more than ten yards broad, but fearfully steep; it was only about twenty yards long, and finished abruptly in a rocky precipice, thousands of feet deep. We left our poles on one side of this slope, so as not to make a noise. Then my head shikaree crossed the snow first, but stepped so gently that he only made the snow more slippery for me, without making any steps for my feet, and consequently, when I was half-way across I slipped, and proceeded to slide quietly down towards the yawning chasm below me. Now, I have often read in books how, in a moment of extreme peril, the life of a man and

every deed from his earliest childhood have passed before him in one rapid panorama—of the agony of those few brief seconds, and how the mind turns back from the present to the past. This may or may not be true; for my own part, I know I thought a good deal more of frightening away the ibex than of anything else, and consequently, when I went gently sliding down to certain destruction, I dug my fingers into the snow and tried to stop myself in every way, without thinking for a moment of calling to the man in front, whose back was towards me, and who could turn round and catch me in a moment. Then I heard a noise like the hiss of a snake from the man behind me, and my shikaree turned, and stretching out his hand, seized mine, reached out to meet him, and stopped me within six feet of the edge of the precipice, which I afterwards looked down from a more secure footing—a precipice, the sight of whose cruel rocks made me shudder, turn sick, and thank God for my great escape.

On peeping round the rocks, there was the ibex, lying down chewing the cud, his back towards us, and not more than a hundred and twenty yards off. Oh that I had followed my own inclination and shot him then!

But I did not. My shikaree said, "You can get twenty yards nearer and make sure of him, and he cannot get away, as we are in his path." And so I crawled along for twenty yards, and then raised my rifle and looked

over the rock in front of me. But the pinnacle was vacant, the ibex had disappeared; where or how we could not make out. The spot he was on was the point of a pinnacle of rock, about four feet by two feet: we closed the only approach to it; and as we could see nothing of him whatever, we were forced to conclude that he had leapt down from his post of observation on to a ledge full thirty feet below.

CHAPTER VI.

STILL SHOOTING IN THE TILAIL VALLEY.

The Sun and the Moon—A Tough Customer—An Odd Bridge—Plenty of Bears—Snakes—About the Water in Tilail—About the Men—Another Big Bear—The Lahun Nullah—Musk Deer—Salt Licks—Flowers—A Light-coloured Bear—A Sprained Ankle.

About this time I noticed that in places on the top of the snow ridge on the east side of the streams—which was always opposite to us, as we went up the west bank, that being more open and easier walking—I say I noticed in places on the top of the ridge where the snow was piled up like a wall, that when the sun rose behind it, the snow was quite transparent. And I also noticed that where the sun shone strongest the snow looked a bright salmon, or rather *rose-de-thé*, colour. It was probably pink, the complementary colour to the blue sky, but it seemed to me to be *rose-de-thé*.

Talking about the sun naturally leads to a remark about the moon. In the beginning of May, while Lydekker and I were sitting over the fire, after dinner one night, we noticed that there was a *full* moon, and it then struck us simultaneously that the night before we had made

some remark about the brightness of the *half* moon. Being puzzled, we sent for Suddick, and asked him what was the matter with the moon. Suddick, who spoke "perfect" English, answered, "Me don't know what you call him, sahib; but last night, Hindoo man him no eat him food, case (because) him say some one eat him moon; when him finished, then him moon be full moon again; so him sing and pray, but him no eat him food." On referring to my diary I found there was an eclipse of the moon on the previous night, which fully accounted for our seeming phenomenon. This Hindoo tradition is much the same as one held in China, where they say the Dragon eats the moon, and they all immediately turn out and beat tomtoms, tin pots, kettles, or anything to make a noise and frighten the Dragon away, which they finally succeed in doing, if they only continue their noise long enough.

Our next camp was at a village of five huts called Surudab, on a nice piece of turf by the river, half-way between Badagam and Buillunder. From here I went to Buillunder, and the first day saw nothing till the evening, when a bear appeared on the hill above us, feeding. He was a very big one, so I waited till he had finished his dinner, when, having watched him lie down in some short scrubby stuff, I proceeded to crawl up to him. Every time we trod on a stick or even a leaf he lifted his head, and we lay flat down like "a spread eagle." At last we got within a hundred yards of him,

but could only see the top of his back, so I threw a stone at him. Up he jumped, turning his chest and shoulder towards me, at a very sharp angle. I fired one barrel and hit him in the left shoulder; he tried to get up, but fell backwards and went crashing down the hill past us on to the snow. We thought he was dead, when suddenly he jumped up and hurried off as fast as he could, stopping to bite his shoulder now and then, and roaring like a bull. He scrambled across the snow, leaving a great red track behind him. As he went up the opposite hill I fired again, and hit him in the hind leg; he rolled over two or three times, and then got up and bustled off faster than ever. I fired again and missed him, and then we all set off after him as fast as we could; but he got away in the dark, and we had to pass the night under a rock.

The next morning I sent two men off after our friend of the night before, while I returned to my tent without seeing anything more. About twelve o'clock the men came in with the skin of the bear. They followed his track by the blood, and found him dying on a rock quite four miles from where he left us the night before. He had broken his skull in falling down the rocks, and on skinning him we found in the side of his neck an old twelve-bore bullet, that shows what tough customers these bears are sometimes. He was a good-sized beast, measuring seven feet and a quarter in length and five feet and three-quarters across the shoulders.

All those nullahs which we were shooting run out of the northern side of the Valley of Tilail, and as the southern side consists of a ridge, covered with pines most of the way along, I was rather anxious to see what was on the other side of this ridge. Accordingly, one afternoon my shikarees and I proceeded to climb up the hillside, having crossed the river by a bridge just below Badagam. These bridges are peculiar. I mentioned the ordinary deodar bridge before; but where the river is too wide for a single tree, the people's ingenuity helps them in this way. These bridges are made, as it were, of ladders, *i.e.*, two trees with short pieces across pegged on to them, and so, instead of speaking of trees, I will call them ladders. A ladder is planted in the ground on each bank of the river at an angle of about 15° with the ground; stones are piled on the ends in the ground to keep them from rising. Then a third ladder is laid across to the two top ends of the other ladders, which project over the river, and thus they manage to span their wider streams. Generally the side ladders project considerably above the centre one, and thereby make these bridges rather unsightly. They are always very springy, and not unfrequently give way altogether.

After about two hours' walking we reached the top of the ridge and looked down into the Lahun Nullah. This nullah runs parallel with Tilail for about fourteen miles; it is very narrow—only room for the stream at the bottom—and the sides are very steep. On the opposite side of

the nullah were grand snow-fields, stretching away toward Haramook, and over them is a seldom-used path which leads into the Scind Valley and so to Srinagar. While the coolies were pitching the small tent I had brought with me, I sat down, and looking on the opposite side of the nullah, in a quarter of an hour I saw no less than seven bears.

The next day at 3.30 a.m. I went down into the nullah. It was a very steep descent, and dreadfully trying to the knees. There was plenty of snow over the river, so it was easy walking along the bottom; but although we went nearly up to the end of the nullah, and saw plenty of tracks about, we never saw a bear.

I was just sitting down to have some breakfast, when my shikaree caught me by the arm and sent me spinning down the bank into the snow. When I picked myself up, I found him chopping away at a snake which I had nearly sat upon. It was a pretty little beast, only about two feet and a half long, black and brown, beautifully marked; but it had two most disagreeable-looking teeth, and a tail with what looked like a sting at the end of it. My shikaree said it was a very dangerous one.

Talking about snakes reminds one of a very good story I heard in India. I don't know whether it is original or not, but here it is.

There had been a cricket match in a station somewhere in Central India, and one of the players, having just been caught out after a brilliant innings, went into

his tent with his bat in his hand, and was just about to throw himself on his bed to rest, when he caught sight of a cobra just by the foot of the bed, which, on being observed, instantly sat up and opened its hood. What did the young cricketer do? Did he rush out of the tent immediately? Did he call for aid against his terrible opponent? Not he! He just lifted his bat and hit the cobra away to square-leg for five.

We had to drink snow-water for breakfast, as we could not find a spring anywhere.

In the Tilail Valley the water was so perfect that we never wanted anything to mix with it. We noticed that there was a line of springs of the purest water springing out along the northern side of the valley. On searching into the cause of this, we found that the upper part of the northern slope was all glacier-bed, and the lower part was slate, so that the water, coming from springs, or from glaciers away up in the hills above, filtered through this glacier-bed till it came to the slate, where it was thrown off, and appeared either trickling through moss, or bursting out of holes like rats' holes, very often every twenty or thirty yards along this northern slope. This water was perfectly cold, and much the best I ever tasted in my life.

I cannot help thinking that the pureness of the water is in a great measure the cause of the Cashmeree being physically so much finer than natives of the plains of India.

The Hindús of Cashmere are apparently a totally different race to the Hindús of Bengal; they are not only much finer men, but many of them are fair-haired, ruddy-looking fellows, almost like Englishmen.

The Mahomedans are darker, and have a most unmistakably Jewish cast of face. Many are really handsome men, with well-defined features and well-marked eyebrows. This I noticed particularly in the Tilail Valley, but I believe it is the same all over Cashmere.

I noticed also that Cashmerees have very pretty names as a rule; I might mention some among our followers to give you an idea of them. We had Suddick, Budda, Cuidro, Remah, Phuttah, Rosalio, Lussoo, Sitarrah, and Ramânah.

But I must get back to the Lahun Nullah.

Coming down the nullah again in the afternoon, we soon came across a fresh track, and found the owner feeding on the hillside. We stalked him and got within fifty yards, when I had a beautiful shot at him. As I fired, he gave a grunt and went scrambling down the gully he was feeding in. I ran after him to see where he was going, when I caught sight of the two men we had left quite safe down below, running over the snow for their lives; they evidently thought the bear was coming down after them, and they *did* run. However, before the bear got half-way down there was a grunt and he rolled over quite dead. He proved larger than the one

I had shot at Buillunder, being over six feet across the shoulders.

As we got down below we saw another bear bolting up the other side, wondering what all the noise was about.

We then proceeded to climb the hill to where the tent was, the steepest climb I think I ever had. We had got about a quarter of the way up, when a third bear appeared on the other side of the nullah.

So down we went again and up the other side. We had to climb some perpendicular rocks to get the wind of him, and just as I was getting close to him, I slipped and sent a big rock thundering down to the bottom; but he did not seem to mind it, and went on feeding, so I had another nice shot and rolled him over. He was a smaller bear, but had a beautiful skin.

Then I had to climb that awful hill again, and did not reach my tent till long after dark.

This Lahun Nullah is very grand indeed; the sides in some places are quite perpendicular. There seems to be no sign of glacier-beds, like one sees in Tilail, but walls of light green slate and limestone rocks, the ledges of which are covered with ferns and flowers. As I said before, there is only room for the stream at the bottom; indeed, in one place, it flows between the rocks where they are not more than five and twenty feet wide.

The south side of the nullah is half as high again as

the north side, and the top was a vast snow field. There were some very pretty waterfalls, but I saw very few springs, and where my tent was pitched the coolies had to bring water from a spring about three hundred yards off, on the Tilail side of the ridge.

Next morning, on my way down to our camp, I got another musk-deer. These little creatures are very peculiar in appearance. The hair is very harsh and rigid, and stands erect from the skin, but it is so closely set that it makes an exceedingly thick covering. The males have curved tusks growing down from the upper jaw, and a pouch filled with the musk, from which they take their name, growing under the body. The colour of their coat is grey, and they have long large ears standing up like horns. Their mode of progression is peculiar, as they generally go in jumps of considerable length and height, taking all four legs off the ground at the same moment. I found the flesh of the musk-deer most excellent eating.

I noticed that the villagers were generally up and about at 4 a.m., but they seldom worked in the fields until 8 a.m., thus losing the four cool hours of the day. I asked my shikaree what they did during those four hours. "Oh," said he, "they eat their breakfasts." Rather a lengthy feast, I thought.

I got some milk at a village I passed, but it was sour, as usual. It is very hard to get good milk in Cashmere. I think it is because they never by chance

clean any of their vessels, and the dirty pans turn it sour immediately.

We now had six days' incessant rain, after which we went back to the Satani Nullah, as my shikaree said there were some good salt licks there which were regularly visited by ibex at this time.

This is only another example of Nature's forethought. She knows that ibex, like everything else in this world, will sometimes take too much of a good thing; and so, the ibex having made themselves rather unwell by eating too largely of the beautiful young grass which springs up as the snow disappears, Nature provides them with these salt licks as a slight corrective.

The weather was glorious, very warm after the rain, and the ground was covered with flowers and strawberry plants in full bloom. We passed *one* apple-tree in blossom; I think it was the only one we saw in the Tilail Valley.

We pitched our camp away from the village, about half a mile up the nullah, in a perfect garden of flowers. There were everlasting-peas of every colour under the sun, tall growing heaths, and a mass of white ranunculi. We recognized as English every flower we came across, and even the butterflies, of which there were thousands, were every one of them British. We missed vegetables more than anything, as, though we found a great many spurious imitations of English vegetables growing wild, they were as a rule most unutterably nasty.

However, we managed to get potatoes at several of the villages. They were only introduced into the Valley of Tilail in 1869, and the villagers do not seem to like them, and were only too glad to sell them to us. We found plenty of mint, and lived for days on lamb and mint sauce, with new potatoes.

We then moved our camp about eight miles up the nullah, and pitched it in a lovely grove of birch and pine, among the rocks where I had slept on my former visit to Satani.

Lydekker and I went out together next morning up the hills behind our camp, and at the top we separated, one going to the right, the other to the left. From the top of the rocks where I now was I had another grand view, almost as grand as the one from Rajdiangan, from Nanga Parbat, 26,690 feet, on the north, to the snowy peaks far away towards Dras. I found a splendid ground for ibex up here, the rocks being heaped up one on the other in a most fantastic manner, but though I saw several through my glasses, we never managed to get a shot at them.

A day or two after, I visited the great salt-lick of which my shikaree had spoken, but had a piece of bad luck there.

On arriving at the salt-lick, we found the snow round it positively covered with tracks of ibex, and my shikaree said they came at night-time, so I determined to stay and watch that night. We then crossed the river, and

in doing so I slipped on a round smooth stone and sprained my ankle very severely. Finding a fresh bear's track close by, I sat down to wait for him, and in doing so allowed my ankle to get cold and stiff, so that when, finding the bear not inclined to appear, I tried to walk on, I found it extremely painful. However, sighting another bear in the distance, and thinking the exercise would do me good, I set off after him, and after a long climb and a deal of trouble succeeded in bagging the prettiest bear I ever saw. The skin was a yellow colour; and I noticed that the higher I went the lighter-coloured were the bears I found. By the time I had killed this bear, my ankle was so bad that I determined to stay there for the night and try for ibex next day, and so, making ourselves as comfortable as possible among the rocks, we made grand plans for the morrow.

The next morning, instead of going after ibex, it was as much as I could do to get back to our camp; however, with the help of a man on each side I managed to hobble along. I preferred walking by the side of the river to trying my other ankle on the slope above, and so we scrambled along, sometimes in and sometimes out of the river, and in the course of our walk had to ford this torrent no less than five times, the water being nearly up to our shoulders in one place, and up to our waists in the others. I saw two small herds of ibex

pass on their way to the salt-lick, but could only sit and grin with rage at them.

For four days after this I could not put my foot to the ground, and so lost all chance of getting an ibex at the salt-lick.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM TILAIL TO DRAS.

Meeting Friends—A Concert—The End of the Valley—Ibex Fighting—The Sources of the Kishen Gunga—Marmots—Fording the River—A Peculiar Pass.

As soon as I could walk again we had to return to Pitrani Tilail, as it was time we were getting on towards Dras.

I forgot to say that we had arranged to meet Barclay and Cresswell at Lé about the 15th of July.

This was now the 25th of June, so that we had only three weeks to get to Lé, and should not be able to make many stoppages on the way.

Going down the nullah again, we saw no sign of game, but we noticed how much thicker the jungle had got even during the fortnight that had passed since we left Pitrani Tilail. Everything was growing most luxuriantly, and we walked through banks of flowers of all kinds and colours.

I remember that afternoon I sat in a regular bed of irides, on the edge of the Satani stream, with my game-

foot in the water, and read many newspapers kindly lent to us by Major Ravenhill, who came to take our place in the nullah. I afterwards heard that he had not much better luck up there than we had, but I fancy he *missed* a big ibex. We had a very pleasant dinner together, however, and he told us some interesting facts about the country and the people, and next morning we departed, as I said, loaded with newspapers.

From Pitrani Tilail we went on to Surudab again, to wait for our coolies, who had gone to Srinagar to fetch stores, etc., to last us to Dras.

We there had the pleasure of dining with Colonel and Mrs. Molyneux, who gave us a kind invitation to stay with them on our way down country, an invitation we were not slow to accept.

Mrs. Molyneux is, I believe, only the second lady who has gone right through the Tilail Valley; and, taking in view the roughness of the road in some places, more especially the pass at the end of the valley towards Dras, it must be considered as a most plucky thing for a lady to do.

The evening before we left there was a grand gathering of various "lumbadars and kotwals," headed by the Thanadar and his padré. They had a big pray all together, and a grand concert in the evening. The orchestra consisted this time of a tum-tum and a rábaba, an instrument like a guitar, played with half an inch of wood instead of the finger. We had some

excellent songs, Suddick being *facile princeps* with his Srinagar boatmen's songs.

The next morning we went up the valley, having quite a little caravan of coolies and ponies, sheep and goats. It is a most pleasant walk—a good path nearly all the way; and as we got further up the river the hills began to close in on each side and the scenery became grander. About eight miles up we caught a glimpse up a nullah, on the other side of the valley, of a grand peak, Remino, which I mentioned before as being at the upper end of the Lahun Nullah. It looked quite inaccessible from our side of it.

Just here was a glorious spot where three rivers join together and form the Kishen Gunga. We followed the centre one, and soon found ourselves at the village of Gujrind. There we rested till the coolies came up, and then on we went again, and soon we got on to the snow.

The sun was very hot, and we found it rather hard work; we got to the Sirinna Nullah about four o'clock, having had a glorious walk of about seventeen miles. We were much higher now, but found a pleasant clump of willows by a stream, where we soon had our tents up. Towering above us were the mountains at the extreme end of the valley—the mountains which divide Tilail from Dras—a grand mass of rocks and snow, and the finest glacier we had yet seen.

While we were pitching our tents, Lydekker went up the nullah and got a good bear.

Next morning I went up the Sirinna Nullah, walking along the snow at the bottom, between the most extraordinary and fantastic rocks I ever saw. Here and there was an opening, giving a glimpse of a patch of grass away up towards the snow tops of the mountains. I saw a number of ibex, does and young bucks, but nothing shootable. At last the nullah, which had been getting narrower as we went further up, opened out suddenly, and we found ourselves at the end of it in a most curious amphitheatre, the centre of the back of which was a glacier, and the sides great mountains of rock and snow.

High up on a little patch of green I at last saw some real ibex—two splendid bucks and several does. The bucks were fighting, and, though they were a long way off, I almost fancied I could hear the clash of their horns as their heads met together. Those two must have been quite fifty-inch ones; but as they went on fighting they kept edging away uphill, and I saw no chance of getting near them. At last they went away over the ridge at the top, and then I climbed up to their feeding-ground, and sat down to wait for their return in the evening. My shikaree, however, saw some others up another little nullah on the opposite side, so we went down to the bottom again, and as soon as we got there the ibex disappeared. It was too late to do anything that night, so I curled myself up under a rock and passed a most painfully cold night in the snow.

Next morning we found the ibex about half a mile nearer camp. They were again fighting, so we proceeded to crawl up towards them; but by the time we got up to where I thought I should get a shot, they had moved about a mile further on. Up we still went, over snow, over loose slates, and over rocks; but, fast as we climbed, the ibex moved faster, feeding and fighting alternately, till at last we had to give them up altogether. I was higher at this time, I believe, than at any other in Cashmere.

We then had a dreadful descent again to the bottom of the nullah, and then another chase after some more imaginary ibex of my shikaree. It became dark very early that day, and I had a terrible walk back to camp, not getting in till nearly nine o'clock, after tumbling over rocks and through most prickly jungle.

The next day we moved our camp to Baltal, at the foot of the pass over the end of the valley. The first mile our path led through a regular English woodland scene, over stepping-stones in pools of clearest water, and through banks of regular English wild flowers; then up a long slope of snow, which took us into the Valley of Baltal a circular valley, almost surrounded by mountains, and boasting the two finest waterfalls I saw in Cashmere.

We were here caught in a storm, which came on so suddenly that we were wet through before we could find any shelter, and which so saturated the ground that we

found it extremely difficult to make the tent-pegs hold, and more difficult still to find any dry wood to light a fire with.

The afternoon was fine, and Lydekker and I took a ramble. Following the stream up, we at length came to two of the sources of the Kishen Gunga. The principal one was a dark stream bursting out underneath the foot of a splendid glacier, which reached from where we were standing right away to the top of the ridge of mountains. The other was a spring from the rocks on which we were standing. It burst out among moss and ferns, and bounded down the rocks in a stream thirty feet wide, reminding me very much of the Birnam falls at Dunkeld. These two streams gushed forth side by side: the one a dark, dirty, huge volume of water, roaring and struggling through a cleft in the rocks with a noise like thunder, the other tumbling and laughing over the stones, among flowers and ferns, to the edge of the cliff, and both falling and uniting in a pool a hundred and fifty feet below.

We had a fine climb to get a good view of the glacier, the name of which, according to the natives' pronunciation, sounded like Kowbál.

The next day we left the valley by a track up the side of the mountain. Before we left the mountain-side, we looked back on the Valley of Tilail. It was a glorious view. We had turned two or three corners in the last day or two, so that we could not see down the valley, and

there seemed to be so many hills that we could hardly make out where the valley itself lay. However, we had some landmarks pretty well known to us by this time, and so we made out the position of our former camps right away to the end of the valley, to the top of the pass we sat on while our shikarees smoked their snow pipes.

All the way up this hill-side the ground was regularly carpeted with flowers. The principal flower was a small yellow one, growing on a little dark green bush with a leaf like a myrtle. It had a very strong scent, rather like that of a ripe banana. Suddick said, "Mem sahibs put him in him hair when him go dance;" meaning, ladies wear it at balls instead of camellias, or that kind of thing.

Between the two hills above the mountain-side was a piece of turf with rocks lying about, apparently fallen from the hill-tops above, and as we approached we saw the tails of numerous marmots just disappearing into their burrows. One, unfortunately for himself, more curious than the others, sat outside his house to see what was going on, and I promptly had a shot at him, and knocked him right down his hole, but could not fish him up again.

Marmots are very much like large guinea pigs, with a tail about six inches long; in some places we found them with red coats, and in others with grey. I believe they are just the same as what are known in America as

prairie-dogs. Their burrows are very deep, and often seem to go straight down to the bowels of the earth. They sit outside these burrows, so that when shot they will often fall back into their holes, and even if they are a yard or two away from them, unless you give them a good charge of shot in the head, they will generally manage to crawl into their holes to die.

A gentle ascent brought us to the top of the pass: a frozen lake on one side of us, and a glacier among most fantastic-shaped rocks on the other. The snow was covered with tracks of marmots, and a little way down the other side we came to another ground, where they were sitting outside their holes and squealing like—well, I don't know what they do squeal like; perhaps more like a cart-wheel crying for grease than anything else I know. I knocked four into their holes before I found out that their head was really the only vulnerable part.

We had now apparently entered an entirely new country. There was not a tree to be seen, and only a bush here and there; all bare green slopes, with masses of snow hanging over the river on each side. Of course, the river was now flowing the opposite way, and we were going down stream instead of up. These masses of snow kept falling in, now and then, with a noise like thunder, and as our path sometimes took us along this very snow, we had to take care that we did not go sliding into the river with it.

We had to ford the river to get to our camping ground; the water was about waist-high, and bitterly cold. We found a spot for our tents on some rough grass surrounded by dwarf bushes, at the foot of the Koredgi Nullah.

The river here ran in a number of deep channels through a wide stony bed, and in some of the little backwaters our men caught small fish which to us tasted remarkably nasty, but which they seemed to enjoy immensely.

Next day we got some marmots near here, and then went on about twelve miles and camped in a most charming spot, with plenty of bushes and rocks to shelter us from a very cold wind that was blowing.

We also got some very good red marmots here, and while at dinner my shikaree came in to say there was a bear having his dinner also, just across the river. So off he and I went on two ponies, to try and cross the river, and a lively time we had of it. It was about two hundred yards wide at this place, and although it did not look very deep, it was running a tremendous pace, and there was any amount of holes. The ponies were very plucky, and managed to keep their feet very well till we got about the middle, when mine went into a hole, and souse I went with him; but we somehow both managed to scramble out just in time to see my shikaree's pony carried off his legs by the stream. But they recovered themselves, and after wandering about in the

water for nearly half an hour we got across, and having hitched our ponies to a rock, we crawled along the bank till we came to a torrent, which we had to ascend about a quarter of a mile before we could find a place to cross. At length by clinging to each other, we managed to overcome that difficulty, and then found ourselves where we had seen the bear feeding. We looked about, but never a sign of the bear could we discover. Lydekker and the men, from the tents, could see where the bear had lain down after he had finished his dinner, but were too far off to make us understand where he was, and so they sat and watched us hunting for him. At one time I was within a yard or two of him, and as my shikaree was carrying my rifle, and I had only a knife with me, it was rather lucky for me that he did not get up. I don't know whether he really was asleep, or whether he was watching us; but when we went over a rise in the ground just out of his sight, he got up and trotted off as fast as he could, and soon after, to our great astonishment, we saw him going away in the distance over the snow. I sent a couple of messengers after him to stop him, but the distance was too great and he went right away.

We then had the pleasure of recrossing the river, and as it was rapidly getting dark, we had a still more lively time of it. Suddick came half-way across to meet me, and piloted me over the worst part, and I was soon between the blankets, with some hot grog, watching my clothes steaming at the fire in front of my tent.

About two miles further on we found the pass dividing this country from Dras. The ponies were left here with a man to take them back to Tilail, as they could not cross the pass. When travellers come this way with horses, they have to follow the river, a march of about four days longer, over a very rough country, bare of vegetation nearly all the way.

This pass, which we proceeded to cross, is just a mass of smooth, steep, slippery rocks, and we had to hold on with both feet and hands to save us from slipping down to the bottom.

Mrs. Molyneux, whom I mentioned before, sent her horse round by the river and came across these rocks, a feat by no means to be despised.

After we had crossed this peculiar pass we had a long march into the Dras Valley, passing one small village on the way—a village which we stood and stared at with astonishment. It was built of mud; and after seeing nothing but picturesque wooden houses before, when we came upon this curious collection of mud huts we began to realize that we had come right through one country into an entirely different one.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM DRAS TO LÉ.

The Fort—The People—Polo—The Yarkand Mission—The Aspect of the Country—Urvar—A Grand Polo Ground—A Castle—The Namgka La—Manés—Chortens—Lamayuru—The Lamas—A Buddhist Temple—Kalsi—"Cesspool"—Lé.

The valley gradually widened till at length, from the summit of a slight ascent, we looked down on Dras.

Just below us was the fort, a large white building by the side of the river; a little further on was the Thanar of Dras, with a clump of trees by the side of it—the only trees we had seen for four days; and there were a few houses built of stone and mud scattered about the large green valley, surrounded by rocky mountains on all sides. There was a curious geological formation, which we noticed at once, across the eastern end of the valley. It had every appearance of being a huge unfinished railway embankment, and my friend Lydekker said he had noticed several about this country, but none so grand or perfect as that one. The sun was very strong here, and we were glad to pitch our tents under the shadow of the trees in the Thanadar's compound.

The people of Dras, which is under the dominion of the Maharajah of Cashmere, are apparently of Chinese origin, having marked Chinese features, and wearing the customary pig-tail. They are called Bots, and are, I believe, a mixture of the Tibetan and Tartar races.

The Thanadar of Dras, a most respectable old gentleman, escorted us to the fort, which we desired to visit. The garrison consisted of five and twenty men, only seven of whom were at this time in the fort, the rest being billeted in the villages round, where they live on the people by threats, and sometimes by violence.

They showed us two small brass cannon which they were very proud of, and when I asked if they had got any rifles or muskets, the commanding officer said, "No, but we have got a sword." At least, this is what I understood him to say.

We had a heavy shower of rain while we were here; they say it never rains beyond Dras, on the Lé road, but that is a mistake, for it rained at Lé while we were there.

While we were at breakfast next morning, Major Blake came in from his camp, which we had passed two days before. He had not had any sport, although another man, who was shooting a little further north of him, bagged some very good ibex.

In the afternoon we witnessed a game of polo on the plain, outside the Thanadar's compound, but the players seemed to have a very slight knowledge of the game, and

took but very little interest in it. The principal feature of the game was picking the ball up in the hand without dismounting from the pony, and then throwing it up in the air and hitting it away while going at full gallop.

The ponies were very poor, scraggy little beasts, and were not to be compared with the ponies we saw afterwards at Lé; and as we saw the game played properly there, I need say no more about it at present.

In the evening Major Blake's coolie came in with some English papers, and we had another rare feast of news.

The coolie said he had passed two sahibs, the day before, who were going to Lé, and we, supposing them to be Barclay and Cresswell waited for another day; but then another man came in and said there were no sahibs on the road. Why that other man should have told such a lie I don't know; however, next day we left Dras, Major Blake going back to Srinagar, and following the river we came, after an uninteresting walk of sixteen miles along the bank, to the village of Tashgam, and there made a halt.

The road was exceedingly good, having been prepared for the Yarkand Expedition, which was now returning. Sir Douglas Forsyth and Captain Chapman passed through Dras a day or two before we got there, and we met Colonel Gordon and Captain Biddulph about five miles beyond Tashgam.

We spent a most pleasant day in their company, and

listened with astonishment to the tales of what they had seen and done in Central Asia. Colonel Gordon was kind enough to show us his sketches, and Captain Biddulph unpacked for our inspection some of his birds, of which he made a most extraordinary and beautiful collection. They told us of the sad death of their companion and friend, Dr. Stolickza, an event which was most deeply deplored by the whole of British India.

The next day we parted, and leaving them to return to Cashmere we marched on to Kargil.

We were told on all sides before we started that the road from Dras to Lé was probably the most horribly uninteresting one in the world. Now, I won't go so far as to say that, for on this first journey of ours I must say we found plenty to interest us, but on the return journey, which we foolishly made by the same road, we could not help feeling that we should not care to come that road again.

However, on this journey, even through the most barren parts of the country, my friend Lydekker kept me constantly interested by pointing out to me the changes in the geological structure of the rocks surrounding us.

We passed through a succession of igneous rocks, of granite, sandstone, limestone, etc., varied every now and then by a glimpse of a little village, surrounded by its few fields and a grove of trees, on the banks of a mountain stream—a perfect oasis in the desert.

STOLICKZA'S GRAVE AT LÉ.

To face p. 98.

The first place of any size we came to was Kargil. The river we had been following here falls into a larger river, coming down from Sooroo and flowing towards Skardo.

Along this river for about two miles is scattered the village of Kargil, on a strip of cultivated land about three hundred yards broad with a little white hut here and there. At the end of the two miles the valley opens out at the junction of two rivers, the one from Sooroo and the other from above Shergool. A fort stands between them, apparently to command the passage of both rivers, neither of which is in the least degree navigable. Close by the fort is an orchard standing on an island, and the Thanar looks down upon it. We got some green peas here for the first time, an event of no little importance to us.

Our next march, from Kargil to Shergool, was certainly the most interesting one between Dras and Lé.

About five miles from Kargil, following up the course of the Shergool river, we came to Paskyun, a ruined and deserted city. There did not seem to be half a dozen living inhabitants in the place, but there were numerous departed ones, to judge from the number of little mausoleums about.

A little further on we came to Urvar, a splendid old polo-ground, flanked by glorious trees, with a strange old building, a balcony running along the front of it, on one side of the ground.

Every village in Ladâk boasts its polo-ground; but this one was so huge and so beautifully situated, that one might shut one's eyes and fancy it peopled with grand heroes of old, clad in armour "cap-a-pie" while that wonderful old balcony was thronged with ladies in beautiful dresses, presided over by the Queen of Beauty, cheering the knights on to deeds of valour by their words and glances. O that I could have seen a tournament such as Chaucer sang of!—

> "The heralds left their pricking up and down,
> Now ringen trumpets loud and clarion.
> There is no more to say, but east and west,
> In go the speares sadly in the rest,
> In goth the sharp spur into the side,
> There see men who can just and who can ride;
> There shiver shaftes upon shieldes thick,
> He feeleth through the heart-spone the prick;
> Up springen speares, twenty feet in height,
> Out go the swordes to the silver bright;
> The helms they to-hew'en and to-shred;
> Out burst the blood with stern streames red."

But I am dreaming, so let me return to sober prose again.

High above the polo-ground, perched on a huge mass of rock, were the ruins of a grand old castle. I declare, one might fancy the ruin had been transplanted from the banks of the Rhine, and set down in the midst of this howling wilderness.

This was the ruin of an old castle of the monks in the by-gone ages, when every man's hand was against

his neighbour. The monks got the people to build these places for them, and then, in time of an invasion from a neighbouring state, the whole village used to shut themselves up with the monks in the castle and stand a siege; but, as I noticed that these castles were generally built as far as possible from any water, I should say that a siege lasted about a week in those days.

We passed more castles on the way to Shergool, and there found the greatest lot of ruffians one could possibly imagine. The men certainly seemed a much worse set than any others we had seen, and the women, too, were frightful. The places seemed to be full of what they were pleased to call temples, which were really square blocks of mud painted with men, dragons, devils, etc. And away up on a sandstone cliff above the village was a house, which looked like a combination of an old-fashioned black and white house from Dover and a doll's-house from the Soho Bazaar; this, they said, was the occasional residence of a god.

The inhabitants of this place were a dirty, savage-looking lot of brutes, some with pigtails, and some with their long, greasy black hair hanging loose down their backs.

They are all followers of the doctrine of polyandry, and that in itself was sufficient to inspire us with a strong feeling of disgust.

Passing Shergool, we crossed the Namyka La, about

12,000 feet high; the ascent is so gradual that one does not know really where the summit of the pass is.

We passed more ruins of castles and came to Karbu. Between that and Lamayuru we crossed another pass, the Foto La, about 14,000 feet high. Above us on the left we saw a glacier, the only one on the road. Just before we reached Lamayuru we passed two manés, each nearly four hundred yards long.

A mané is a long building of mud and stones, about five feet high and twelve feet across, the top of which is covered with flat stones with the everlasting inscription "Om mani padmi om!" on them, which means "Hail to the lotus-bearer!"

On inquiring what these stones were for, I was told that this was a kind of cemetery, the people being buried inside, and that these stones with writing on them were letters from their friends on earth; left till called for.

This, however, I found was a mistake. The truth is that each of these inscribed stones forms a prayer, or votive offering to the god Buddha. So that when a man goes a journey, or buys a cow, or marries a wife, or commits any other particular act not of every-day occurrence, he leaves a stone on a mané as a prayer to Buddha for help, and goes on his way rejoicing. This is, of course, a device of the priests, as they alone can inscribe the prayer on the stone, and they must also be paid for it. At each end of the mané there was what they call a chorten. This

is the tomb of a defunct priest, and is gaily decorated with bits of rag and pieces of yâk's hair, etc. There are always two paths past a mané, one on each side, as a true believer in Buddha is always supposed to pass on the right of it.

This place, Lamayuru, was certainly the most curious to look at from a distance I ever saw. It is built among sand and gravel rocks, the tops of which are everywhere surmounted by little gods' houses, or rather, I may call them, dolls' houses. The inhabitants' houses are built below these, and as these small temples are continually slipping off their pillars of sand, the people below must have rather a lively time of it.

Whilst we were having dinner here, some of the Lamas, or priests, paid us a visit. There were about five and twenty, of various ages, all dressed alike in a thick red flannel robe, tied round the waist with a piece of rope. The older the men were, I noticed, the seedier their solitary garment appeared; which led me to the belief, which I afterwards found to be true, that they only had one flannel robe, and that they wore it till it dropped off them.

Some of them were rather jolly-looking, fat old fellows, and one might almost imagine them like the monks of old.

As soon as we had finished our dinner, we followed our dirty, greasy, red-flannelled guides to the temples above the village.

The first one we entered we found so dark that we could make nothing out but some wooden stools. These we did not make out with our eyes, but with our shins.

At last, as we became more accustomed to the darkness, we perceived something of a huge figure, and while we were straining our eyes to find out what it was like, a trap-door opened in the roof, and a stream of light poured down upon a huge golden figure of Buddha. It was beautifully worked, about nine feet high, in a sitting posture, with its legs crossed under it. It had six arms and twenty-one heads; the heads arranged in rows of three each, and getting smaller as they reached upwards, thus forming a pyramid of golden heads. There was a background to the figure like the rays of the sun, consisting of arms straight out in a circle, the hands pointing outwards.

On each side of the figure of Buddha were five smaller figures, all sitting cross-legged, and remarkably like the little gentlemen one sees in any tea-dealer's window in England.

Before Buddha and each of the larger figures was a huge lamp, consisting of a wash-hand basin full of "ghí," with a wick floating in the middle. The amount of ghí, or oil, they consume in this way, must be enormous.

We counted fifteen other little images, besides those I have mentioned, in this one temple.

Outside we were accosted by a man in a hideous mask, who said he was a dancing Chinaman, and proceeded at once to give us a specimen of his accomplishments. But as he apparently had the gout in his left foot, we had to take his word as to his dancing powers; he tried to make up his deficiency by howling what he said was a Chinese hymn, but as it was a language we took no interest in, we left him.

In the second temple, which was most gorgeously painted inside, we found a plaster figure of Buddha, behind an altar on which was arranged, in admirable confusion, a collection of treasures, consisting, amongst other things, of a beautifully worked metal bell and sceptre, about which I shall speak afterwards; some cracked china, two peacock feathers, a willow-pattern plate, and a fine earthenware parrot (market price one penny, at any fair in England).

If you will excuse the digression, I will remark that the greatest treasure that was brought to the late Yarkand Mission, when at Kashgar, was a stone or china dog, such as may be seen on every cottager's chimney-piece at home. I think that circumstance is rather peculiar.

To continue. In this temple there were other figures of celebrities in Buddhism, one of whom they claim as being the original inventor of shawls. The other subjects of interest I noticed were a group of warming pans, for what purpose used I know not; some handsome Lassa

silk bannerets, and a collection of the archives of Buddhism, bound in cloth, with wood on each side, and a curious old seal and label. These were carefully stored away on shelves behind a heavy curtain, and were, I should say, a good deal more valuable than all the rest of the temple put together.

The only other things in this temple worthy of notice we observed in the other, namely, the amount of oil and smell; and our pipes being now out, we declined a pressing invitation to visit any more of their dirty places, and giving "backsheesh," as usual, departed from a den of strange sights and stranger odours.

The next day, while going down a very narrow gorge towards the river Indus, we saw some "boral," the only game we saw during our walk from Dras to Lé.

A short distance after we struck the river we came to a bridge, on the other side of which stood a fort, the road leading right through the middle of it. Just beyond the fort was the village of Kalsi, the prettiest and largest place on the road, except Kargil. After having breakfast there, we went on to Nurla, which place we did not reach till the middle of the day, but luckily we found a small waterfall handy, under which we sat down to cool ourselves after a long march.

We pitched our tents in a most charming spot, under the shadow of walnut, mulberry, and apricot trees, the

fruit of which was not yet ripe; the fields, too, all round us were still quite green.

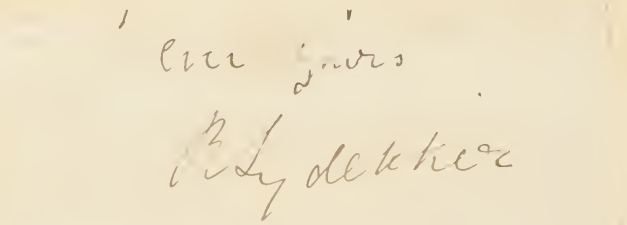
Our next halt was at a place called "Sospul," which really ought to have its name changed to "Cesspool." It was a horribly filthy place, and the Sepoy and Kotwal were both verging on idiotcy. They utterly refused to clean the ground for our tents, or get anything we asked for; till at length I lost all patience, and going to a bush, began to cut a nice-looking pliant stick, which soon altered the scene. Then, in the words of an old rhyme, slightly altered by my friend Lydekker, to whom I am generally known by the name of "Daniel"—

> "Daniel began to cut the stick,
> The stick began to warn the Sepoy,
> The Sepoy began to threaten the Kotwal,
> The Kotwal began to bring the firewood," etc., *ad lib.*

From Sospul to Nimu the path leads along the Indus through very soft deep sand, but as part of this path is washed away every year by the river, it involved a climb up some steep rocks and down the other side. While crossing these rocks we met a long caravan of the smallest donkeys I ever saw, which went scrambling about just like cats. Between Nimu and Lé, it is rather a hard walk of about eighteen miles, up a long ascent to a large plateau, and then down an equally long descent on the other side to the mouth of the valley at the top of which the city of Lé is situated. From this plateau one gets a splendid view of the mountains towards Chang-Chenmo,

and, as we just saw the sun rising on them, it was the finest sight we had had since we left Tilail.

We got to Lé in time for breakfast with Captain Molloy, the British Resident, to whom I beg here to offer my best thanks for his kindness to us during our stay at Lé.



CHAPTER IX.

AT LÉ.

The Country—The City of Lé—Yarkand Merchants—People of Ladâk—The Prayer Wheel—Polo—A Visit to Hemyss—An Interesting Ride—The Lamasery—An Extraordinary Dance—The Temples—The Big Prayer Wheel—Chung—The Garrison of Lé—Start for Knneri—A Grand View—19,300 Feet—Defeated—A Snow Leopard—Back to Lé.

THERE are several clumps of trees at Lé, and the best one is in the Residency compound, where we pitched our tents. It was such a relief to get among some green again, after the widerness we had passed through.

We had come up the Valley of the Upper Indus, which is a high barren plateau running the whole length of the Himalayas, and forming, as it were, a stepping-stone to the huge table-land beyond known as Turkestan.

The prevailing features of this country are bare rocky mountains, bare gravel slopes, and bare sandy plains, with not a green thing, not a tree, not a bush, not even a blade of grass, unless one accepts as green a grey kind of prickly sage which crops up here and there. But what makes the barrenness more noticeable, is that every

few miles one finds a patch of green, as bright as a bit of an English pasture, along a watercourse, springing probably from a glacier far away up in the stony hills above. A few two-storied, flat-roofed, brown houses, gaily decorated with huge stripes of red and white paint around the doors and windows, and gracefully frescoed on the sunny wall of the house with rows of cattle refuse stuck on to dry for burning, a pile of goats' horns on the roof; a small temple stuck up against a rock at the back of the houses; the whole surrounded by half-a-dozen green fields: these form the oases, called villages, in the desert.

The glimpses we had of these oases were so momentary—only catching sight of them as we crossed the nullah down which rushed the little life-giving stream—that they were but as dreams set in the sleep of a vast wilderness. No wonder, then, that we enjoyed our rest under the trees at Lé.

The entrance to the city proper is through a gate leading into the bazaar. This bazaar consists of a wide road with shops on each side, the gateway into the Residency of the Maharajah's Commissioner being half-way down on the left hand. The bazaar forms the polo-ground of Lé.

Towering above the northern end of the bazaar, high up on some rocks, stand the palace and the Lamasery of Lé. The rest of the city is built all round; the British Residency and Joint Commissioners' Court being on the

north-west of the upper end of the bazaar. As we rode up this strange polo-ground, through a crowd of people, we were astonished to see such splendid fellows as most of the Yarkand merchants are. Fine, tall men, wearing a long, bright-coloured robe lined with sheepskin, an under-tunic girt at the waist, wide trousers, and long, untanned leather riding-boots—of French manufacture, I should say by the appearance. On their heads they wore a large coloured turban, and in their hands they generally carried a heavy riding-whip. They were a grand contrast to the people of Ladâk, who are such a dirty, high-cheekboned, smooth-faced, black pig-tailed lot of creatures, while these Yarkandees were many of them ruddy and fair-bearded as Englishmen.

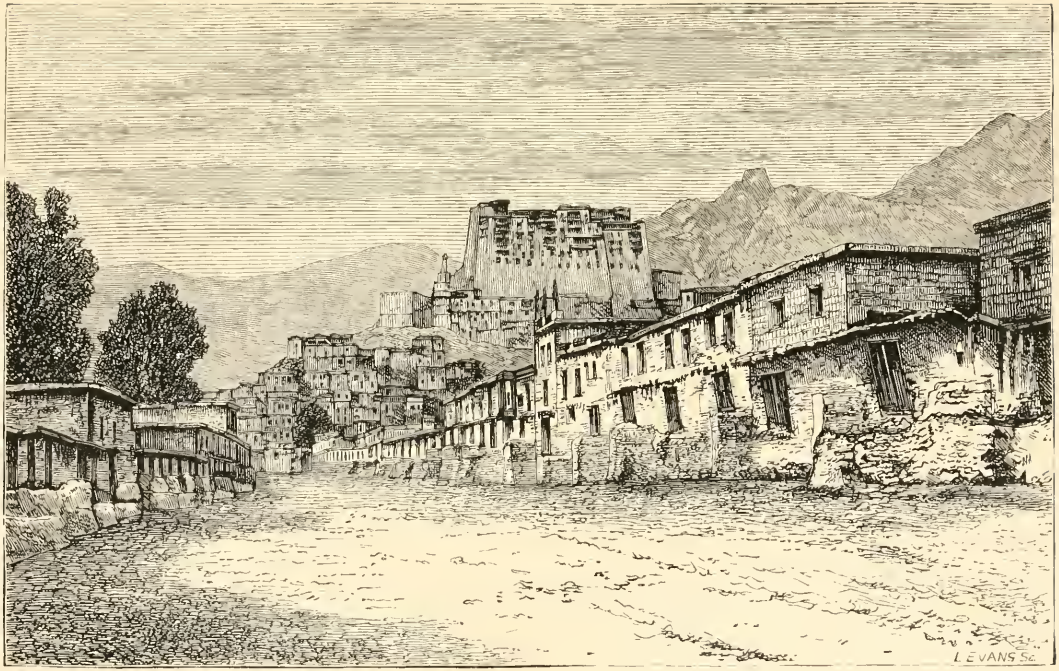
The Tibetan men wear a long woollen frock, girt round with a piece of rope, high cloth boots, and a flat cap with a lappet hanging down one side of their head. The women wear a red and blue striped long petticoat, cloth boots, like the men, a jacket, and a sheepskin cloak thrown over the shoulders, with the wool inside. They have lappets over their ears, attached to a broad strip of leather or silk reaching down to their ankles, and covered with rows of bad green and yellow turquoises, which taper away smaller and smaller to a single stone at the bottom. They say the women carry all their wealth on their heads in this way, and an heiress has been known to be worth as much as £5 10s. Mingling with the crowd are hosts of Lamas, in their

filthy red robe, which is so made that one shoulder and arm is always bare, as also is the head. They are never seen without a prayer-wheel, which consists of a small copper cylinder, inside which the prayer, written on a piece of parchment, is fixed; this cylinder is continually kept turning round on a wooden handle by a slight movement of the wrist, assisted by a little weight at the end of a chain or string attached to the side of the cylinder. This is a most useful invention, as no matter what a man may be doing, whether he be talking, walking, riding, or eating, as long as he keeps his wheel turning he is also praying to Buddha. But he must keep it going the right way, for if it happen to turn round the opposite way it is supposed to utter an imprecation.

At many villages, where the fall of the watercourse is sufficient for the purpose, the people fix a huge prayer-wheel, which is turned by the water; this is an excellent contrivance, as they can then go out and work with both hands, leaving the wheel to pray for them.

We were astonished to find the merchants at Lé very cautious about showing us their goods. I expected to pick up many curiosities there, but most of the men would not own to having anything to show us, and it cost me a deal of trouble to gather together the few odds and ends which I got; but I did manage to procure a bell and thunderbolt of Buddha and a prayer-wheel.

Having expressed a wish to see a game of polo at



BAZAAR AT LÉ.

To face p. 112.

Lé, Mr. Johnson, the Maharajah's Commissioner, ever ready to oblige, gave the requisite order, and the following evening some sixteen players turned up in the bazaar. I mentioned before that the bazaar was the polo-ground. It is about two hundred yards long and twenty yards wide; the shops on each side are raised on a terrace about three feet from the ground. Unfortunately for polo, it was found necessary to have a trench made for water down one side of the road, to supply the houses; and of course, the ball, whenever it got a chance, hopped into the water, and so spoilt many a piece of good play.

Some of the best players were absent, we were told, but those who were present were quite good enough to show us how the original polo is played.

They looked very awkward at first, with their short stirrups, their knees apparently being considerably above the top of the saddle. But to the game.

When the spectators were accommodated with chairs and cigars, in an open balcony on the second story of a house half-way down the bazaar, the signal was given to begin.

Opposite us was the orchestra of four drums and four flageolets, supplemented by six Lamas with the hugest of trombones, out of which they only managed to get one note, that note representing, apparently, the suffering of a prize beast in a fog at the Smithfield cattle show.

Sides having been chosen, all the players grouped

themselves at one end of the ground. The captain of one side then took the wooden ball and started down the bazaar at a gallop, followed by all the rest. As he came along he increased his pace, and the drums rolled away faster and faster to keep time with him. Dropping the reins on his pony's neck, he took the ball in his left-hand, and his polo-stick, which is only about three feet long, in his right; then, as he reached the centre of the bazaar, he threw the ball high in the air and hit it away with his stick.

Off they all went racing for it, the striker's side to help him on with it, and their opponents to get it back to the other end. Now the captain was up to it, but missed it, and one of his opponents, with a good back-hander, sent it back again. Now they gathered round it—no jostling, no hitting the ponies' legs; just quietly trying to hook it away. Now one got it out, and off he went with it; but an unfortunate kick of his pony sent it into the water. Two or three went and had a hit at it, but only succeeded in splashing themselves and every one near them; then a spectator picked it out and threw it into the middle of the ground, and away they went again. Now a good hit took it down to the end of the bazaar, and there was a tremendous race for it; but the striker reached it first, and, leaping off his pony, picked up the ball and thereby scored a goal.

This is the most curious part of the game. If, after one man has hit the ball down to the end wall, one of

his opponents can get past him and either hit it back again or jump off and pick it up, it counts no goal. It is also the most amusing part of the game, as frequently when two men are racing for it, one man jumps off and tries to pick it up while the other one whacks him over the fingers with his stick; or else they both jump off at the same time, and bang their heads together in their haste to pick it up.

Well; they had got a goal, and the band struck up a strain of triumph—at least, I suppose it was meant to be one, although the air was certainly not intelligible to us.

Then off they started again; the flageolets were silent, only the drums went faster and faster as the leader galloped along. Up went the ball, and as it descended he hit it away, sometimes well and straight down the bazaar, sometimes into the faces of the spectators, and sometimes, but very seldom, he missed it; then one of his side was sure to be "following up," and so on they went without stopping. I thought the players did not seem to be very keen in the game, and some were rather uncertain as to which side they belonged; in fact, I noticed, towards the end of the game, that one or two men hit the ball whichever way there seemed to be a good opening.

The game lasted about an hour and a half, and at the end of it the ponies seemed to have had quite enough; and this is not to be wondered at, considering that they had been galloping up and down a road all

the time, and a road that scarcely knows what rain is from one year's end to another.

As soon as the polo was over, the orchestra came down into the road-way, the spectators formed a ring, and the dancers appeared. They always finish a game of polo with a dance; and of all the stupid, dreary, I might say idiotic, entertainments I ever witnessed, this dance was certainly the worst. Why it should be called a dance I cannot imagine; it might be more aptly termed a funereal walk-round. Four men in long black cloaks and flat caps, six women in green dresses, with red cloaks edged with sheepskin over their backs, a great amount of ornament on their heads; these ten persons walked round and round in a circle behind each other, with a peculiar slow, solemn step, accompanied by the slow music of the flageolets and drums. The dance consists, apparently, of five figures, but to us uninitiated persons, it was very difficult to detect any difference between them; at all events, it is not worth while to write further about it.

I may remark, however, that this dancing power is hereditary; that is, it descends from father to son, and from mother to daughter. I remember one of our party was uncharitable enough to say that the sooner these dancing families died out the better.

Hearing that the Lamasery at Hemyss was well worth visiting, we determined to go there a day or two afterwards. It is about twenty-four miles from Lé, and

so one fine evening we rode out about eleven miles to a place called Golab Bagh, where we found our tents pitched and dinner prepared, and next morning early we went on to Hemyss, having sent a messenger the night before to apprise the monks of our intended visit.

My companions had a rather uninteresting ride of thirteen miles; but mine, at least the first part of it, was quite exciting.

I noticed that my pony was suffering from a fearful raging thirst, and so I permitted him to endeavour to assuage it by apparently filling himself with water at the first three large ditches we came to. The whole country is cut up into ditches for the purpose of irrigation. On approaching the fourth large ditch, I was grieved and disgusted to find him still hankering after liquor, and so, when he put his head down to drink, I gave him a gentle cut with my stick, just to suggest that he might as well jump over that one. This seemed so to surprise him that he promptly went head first into the ditch, and, as the Frenchman says in *Punch*, "I did not remain;" but having picked myself up as quickly as possible, I remounted, and finding a nice level piece of ground, I thought a little gentle exercise would perhaps improve both our tempers, so whack, whack, whack went my stick, faster, faster, and faster went the pony, till suddenly he caught sight of a hole before him, and thinking no doubt it was a good opportunity of paying me off for whacking him, he put his fore feet

into it; at the same moment the saddle-girth broke, and I found myself, after standing on my head for a moment's reflection, once more rolling in the dust. Jumping up, I gave myself a good shake to see that no bones were broken, observed that my head had made a severe dent in the rock it had come in contact with, and once more getting on my pony, proceeded on my way to Hemyss, which we reached without further mishap, in time to do ample justice to our breakfast, which was ready for us under a tent kindly put up for our accommodation by the Lamas.

The Lamasery of Hemyss is situated up a short nullah about a mile and a half from the left bank of the Indus. The approach to it leads through long lines of manés, with chortens here and there, all gorgeously decorated with designs in red paint on their bases, and with tufts of yâk's hair, dead flowers, coloured rags, etc., on the pole at the top.

In front of the building, which is of a rectangular shape, about a hundred yards long and forty yards deep, is a pretty grove of trees, through which a stream tumbles and sings over its rocky bed, on its way to join the Indus. Behind the building rise masses of dark-coloured rock, against which the white walls of the Lamasery stand out in bold relief.

It is a two-storied building, the second story being marked by a wooden balcony here and there.

On entering, we were conducted through two or three

dark, dirty little passages into the courtyard, on one side of which were the doors of the two great temples; and on the other side a verandah, the walls under which were covered with most extraordinary little Chinese paintings. Round the whole court was a row of little prayer-wheels, several hundred in number, arranged vertically on a projecting ledge, and I saw one of the villagers, who came in with us, give a piece of money to a Lama and then make a tour of the yard, running his hand along the wheels, as a boy runs a stick along the area railings in London, and setting them all spinning as fast as they could go. He thereby managed to get through several thousand prayers to Buddha in about three minutes.

We were then informed that the grand Chinese masque, for which they are famed at Hemyss, was prepared for our edification. We were provided with seats in the centre of the verandah, and the overture commenced. The orchestra consisted of three of those trombones which I have mentioned before, each about nine feet long, three drums, and three pair of cymbals.

The music was evidently intended to inspire us with horror and dread, and to prepare us for the terrible masks coming. It certainly reminded me of the old days when I gazed on the green curtain slowly ascending and discovering Old Bogie, or some one of that kind, in his den; and when the first act of this masque began, and five figures in wonderful dresses and more

wonderful masks came stalking down the steps from the dark interior of the temple, I almost fancied myself in "Old Drury."

There were five acts in this play, and different dresses in each, all being made of Chinese dragon silk, and worth an enormous amount of money.

In the second act, the masks were all alike, huge gilt ones. In the third act, the masks were all different; one, a red dragon's head; another, a black antediluvian-looking beast; a third, a head with a single eye in its forehead, and a row of little skulls as a kind of head-dress; a fourth head was garnished with snakes and worms; while a fifth was apparently the representation of a very plump baby. Each man wore a kind of kilt over his gorgeous dress, representing a Death's-head, while in each hand was carried either a large or small flag or a baby's rattle.

The last act was what might be called "a monkey ballet," the performers being dressed as monkeys with most excellent and life-like masks.

The whole dance was very solemn, and seemed a kind of dumb incantation as they stalked or whirled round a hole in the ground as if invoking the devil to appear, which, I am very glad to say, he did not.

After this strange performance was over, we made a tour of the building. The first temple we entered had a large gold figure of Buddha, seated cross-legged with a lotus in his right hand; he wore bracelets, necklace, and

armlets of precious stones. The figure was about nine feet high, and around him were ranged the lesser gods, figures of plaster about two or three feet in height. In front of one of these, who seemed to be a great favourite with the villagers, stood numerous offerings of grain, in little brass cups. The pedestal on which Buddha was seated was inlaid with turquoises, lapis-lazuli, cornelians, and several really good emeralds.

The altar in front was decorated with various treasures in the shape of cracked china, peacock feathers, a china dog and parrot, such as I have mentioned before, and other precious relics of the same kind. But the only really important article on the altar was Buddha's bell and sceptre, or rather thunderbolt. These were bronze, cast in Lassa I believe, and beautiful castings they are. The bell is for Buddha to ring when he wants his dinner, the thunderbolt is to throw at any one who does wrong in the world; at least, so we were given to understand by the Lamas.

The walls of the temple were painted in most brilliant colours, representing dragons, men, women, gods, priests, and beasts, antediluvian and otherwise, in most reckless profusion, while the whole place was hung with bannerets of beautiful old Chinese silk.

We went into several other temples, all much alike, the whole place smelling very strong of "chung," which is unfermented beer, made from barley, and "ghí," which is clarified butter.

Before each idol was a bowl of ghí with a lighted wick in the centre.

Our servants, who went with us, did not seem in the least impressed with what they saw, till they came to a larger bowl of ghí than usual, burning away in front of an image; then one of them let off a sudden remark to this effect, "Oh! how they are wasting that ghí!" He then relapsed into his former stolidity, evidently quite overcome at the waste of his favourite ghí. (All the natives souse everything in that horrible stuff.)

We then inspected the big prayer-wheel, which was about twelve feet high and fifteen feet in circumference. Every time it turned round a projecting peg rang a little bell at the side, reminding one most forcibly of the centre hoop at croquet. It must have done a deal of praying in its time, as it looked decidedly the worse for wear.

Having tasted some of their chung, which was rather good, and having given much backsheesh, we took our leave of the Lamas.

Shortly afterwards we saw some of them go out riding; the chief Lama was absent at this time, but the second one came out a great swell in a red robe of better stuff than the others, and a head-covering remarkably like a cardinal's hat.

The head Lama, a few years ago, was a brother of the Rajah of Ladâk; who, by-the-by, now lives on a pension in a retired little village called Stoke, almost opposite Lé, on the opposite bank of the Indus. This

head Lama got most of these wonderful masquerade dresses from China at considerable cost. He afterwards, I believe, committed a slight error in judgment concerning the revenue of the establishment, and, what was worse, got found out, and thereby lost his position and very nearly his life.

I expected to find at this Lamasery, it being the chief one of Ladák, that the priests would be of a better class and better dressed than those I had hitherto met with; but no! they were all healthy, well-fed-looking men, but they were just as ragged and filthy as the Lamas we had seen in all the little villages we passed on the road. I believe the two chief points in their religion are, never to wash, and never to take their clothes off. Most of them certainly would never get them on again if they did take them off, and so they continue to wear them till they positively drop.

They say out there that these Tibetans are only washed twice in their lives, once after they are born, and again before they are buried.

We stayed the night at Golab Bagh, and tried in the garden for hares and snipe, but there were none to be found; next day we got back to Lé.

We stayed here another week, Barclay having a slight attack of fever.

We inspected the Tartar regiment one day. There were only twenty-seven men present, the rest being billeted in the villages round about. They all had old

flint-lock guns, about seven feet long. The Kotwal of Lé was the commandant, and made an efficient drill-sergeant. They march like policemen, on each other's heels, and it was amusing to see the two recruits at the tail, walking up the calves of the men in front of them. The commandant, finding it useless to rate at these two, took to kicking them at last, treatment which they did not resent in the least. The rest of the men knew their drill very well, all the words of command being given in English.

A day or two afterwards our party broke up: the British Commissioner had business at Nimu, Barclay and Cresswell started back for Cashmere, and Lydekker and I went for a climb.

Opposite Lé is a high peak by the name of Kuneri, which Mr. Johnson had surmounted some time before, and had put down as about 20,000 feet high. Thinking we might get a good view of the surrounding country, we determined to spend a day or two on this mountain, and so the first afternoon we walked across to Stoke, a village I mentioned before, and as it was raining, we stayed the night there. The next day, as soon as it ceased raining, we followed the Stoke river up for a few miles, and then, turning to the right, camped on a spur of Kuneri at a height of about 15,000 feet. It began to snow in the evening, and was terribly cold; the coolies we brought from Lé crept under the projecting fly of our tents and were quite

happy, but all night I had to throw things at the side of the tent to stop them snoring.

It went on snowing and hailing till about eleven o'clock next day, when, as it looked like clearing, we started for the top. We took with us three Cashmere servants and three Tibetan coolies, one of whom was supposed to know the way. But as soon as we started he pointed to an eminence about five hundred feet above us and told us that was the top. On this point we begged to differ, as we had seen the peak just before we started right away up in the clouds—I should say above the clouds, as they were sweeping down a long way below us. Every now and then they cleared away for a moment, just giving us a glimpse of Kuneri, above us. I noticed these coolies had strings of onions round their necks, and wondered what they were for, but I soon found out. As we got further up we found it harder and harder to get along. It was not bad walking underfoot, as the snow was firm, where there was any snow, and the rest of the ground was rocky; but the altitude was beginning to tell upon us, and we had to walk about twenty yards and then, to use a vulgar expression, stop and "blow."

But we had a greater difficulty to contend against than the effect of the altitude upon us, and that was the effect of the aconite plant, which grew in abundance among the loose rocks we were climbing over. Then I found out what the onions were for. As soon as we

came to a patch of this aconite, with its dark green leaves and dark blue flower, the coolies held their onions up to their noses and sniffed away to counteract the fumes of the aconite plant.

The effect it had upon us, especially upon me, was most disagreeable. It made my head ache till it seemed almost to be splitting, and I felt so giddy sometimes that I had to sit down and shut my eyes; a little brandy soon put me right, and after we had passed all these plants and got on to the plateau below the peak, the air quickly revived me, and I felt quite equal to climbing the last bit, if only the clouds would allow us.

But the Fates were adverse: the clouds came whirling up and down, thicker and thicker, and we had to sit down on the plateau and wait.

After about two hours the clouds lifted and showed us the rocky peak about a thousand feet above us, and off we started again over snow and loose rocks; but we had only got up about three hundred feet when down came the clouds so thick that we could not see each other, so down we sat again for another hour. While waiting here we got our wished-for view, but only for a minute or two. It seemed to be getting lighter over the valley beyond Lé, and gradually the clouds rolled away, as I have seen them do in Scotland, till we could see first the range of mountains behind Lé, then further and further they rose, till at last, away in the far distance, we saw the mighty range separating us from the

wonders of Turkestan and the curious city of Yarkand. It was almost like a dream, a short, beautiful dream; for while we gazed, the clouds closed down again across the valley, and then opened in the same way on our right, disclosing to us the huge barrier between Tibet and China. Once more the clouds closed down, and we drew a deep breath and said together, "What a wonderful view!"

Then we had one more try to find the peak of Kuneri; but though we got on to the rocky base of the peak itself, the clouds barred our further progress. It was now nearly five o'clock, and we saw it was hopeless to attempt more that day; so we reluctantly turned our backs on the heap of rocks and snow, scrambled down on to the plateau, and got back to our tents as it was beginning to get dark. I had been up higher that day than I had ever been before, or ever shall be again. We could not tell the exact height we attained, but from the description we gave to Mr. Johnson he said it must have been about 19,300 feet.

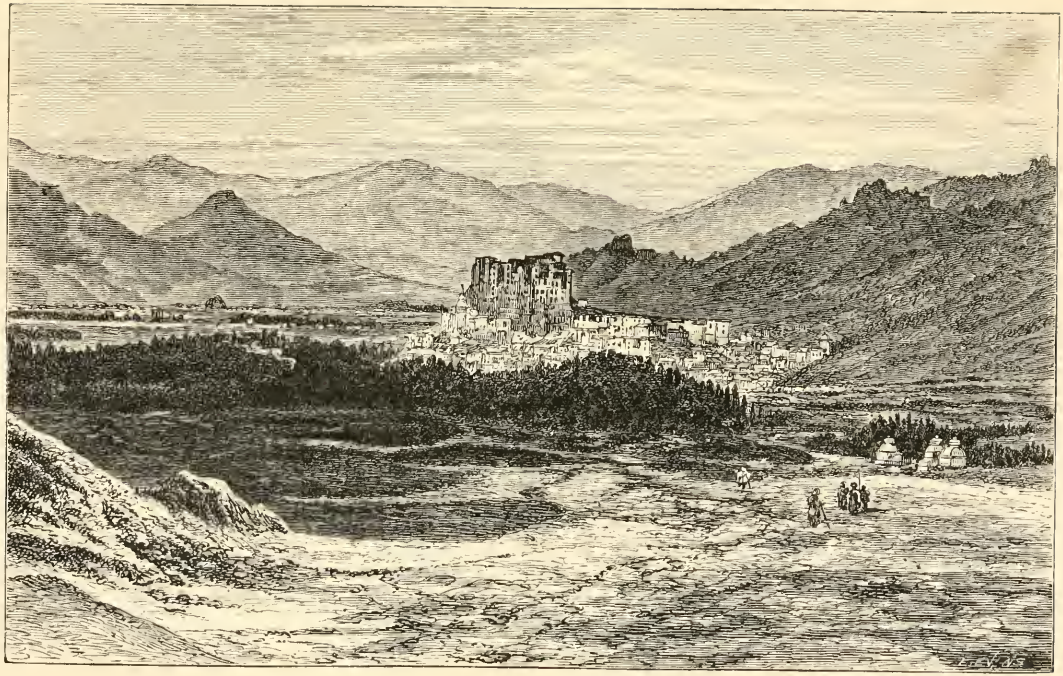
Just as I lay down after I got into my tent, my shikaree came creeping in, saying there was something moving in the rocks below our tents. I got my rifle out, and slipping a couple of cartridges in, crawled out only to see some large animal crossing the top of a ridge by the side of the tent. I ran up this as fast as I could, but was too late, for going away up another ridge about five hundred yards off was a splendid white leopard.

I sent the shikaree round, in case he should lie down on the other side of the ridge, but he went right away and never gave me a chance of a shot. This was the only time I saw the snow-leopard. Mr. Johnson had two good skins, and I think it certainly is the most beautiful animal in the world. It is of a yellowish colour, but white in places, with perfectly black spots and a very long tail. I believe only three have been shot by Europeans, so I was rather chagrined at missing such a chance.

It snowed and rained all that night, and next day was so bad that we saw it was useless to attempt Kuneri again, and proceeded to return to Lé. We passed a small marmot ground on our way back, but could not get a shot at one. In the nullah above Stoke is the ruin of a large monastery, by appearance a ruin from many ages back.

We got back to Lé the same day, and took up our quarters for a day or two in the travellers' bungalow there. The next day "The Central Asian Trading Company," under the command of Mr. Russell, came in to make preparations for taking their goods across to Yarkand. The merchants of Lé seemed much impressed with Mr. Russell's books of patterns, and said that he was a merchant king.

The next day Mr. R. B. Shaw came; he was on his way to take up his new appointment at Kashgar. He was received not only with respect but with great honour.



LÉ, FROM THE ROAD TO HEMYSS.

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All the city turned out to see him, the Sepoy and the Tartar regiments were drawn up inside the bazaar, the Lé band and the Lamas' nine-feet trombones were hard at work, and a salute of thirteen guns made the noise complete.

The crowd in the bazaar was great, and presented a most curious picture: people in the road, in the shops, in the balconies, and on the house-tops; many different dresses, and different faces, but the most conspicuous, and I might almost say most numerous, were the Lamas. Really, I believe I might say half the people in Ladâk are monks.

We had a pleasant dinner with the British Commissioner, and received a hint from Mr. Shaw about a near cut to Dras, which I am very sorry to say we took and of which we repented heartily.

CHAPTER X.

FROM LÉ TO SRINAGAR.

A Bad Road—Harvesting—Dras—Among Flowers Again—A Marg—The Zoji La—The Scind Valley—Sonamarg—Together Again—A Flower Garden—Ganderbal—Srinagar.

Instead of returning from Lé by the same road, we turned off from Basgo, taking a road which turns up towards the hills and away from the river. Mr. Shaw had told us that this was a much better road, but by the time we reached Hemyss we had come to the conclusion that it was the worst piece of travelling we had yet done. It seemed to be an everlasting hill, the path winding about among the rocks and gravel in the most annoying manner. Whenever we came to the top of a particularly hilly ascent, congratulating ourselves, as we toiled up the broken road, with the thought that we should at length look down on our halting-place, we invariably found a much higher and steeper hill right in front of us. At length, after walking up these hills for about eight hours, we came to Hemyss, a village

on a plateau, high up above the right bank of the Indus.

The only thing that marked the difference between this place and our other halting-places between Lé and Dras, was the presence of some curious old pencil cedars, near which we pitched our camp.

From there, next morning, a long and in some places very steep descent took us down to the river again, close to Nurla, where we filled our pockets with apricots. We then walked on to Kalsi, where we found our breakfast ready for us.

Kalsi is certainly the prettiest village on the road; some of the trees are splendid, and there are numerous orchards round about.

Just a month before, when we passed through on our way to Lé, the corn was only turning colour and none of the fruit was ripe, and now we found the villagers in the middle of their harvesting; and while we watched them at work we lay under the shade of the trees and revelled in abundance of apricots, mulberries, and apples.

The mode of harvesting struck us as being peculiar. The people do not cut the grain, they pull it up by the roots. The roots are cut off and piled together for burning. The sheaves are then taken into the little courtyard of the house and spread on the ground, and the ears are trodden out by oxen. Sometimes we saw six or eight of those curious long-tailed, half-bred yâks, yoked together side by side, crawling round and

round the little yard, the inside one forming, as it were, a pivot for the others to turn on.

The straw is then gathered up for winter, and the remainder is carried on to the flat roof of the house, where the women winnow it by throwing it up in the air by shovelfuls, when the husks are carried away by the wind and the grain falls back to their feet. There were showers of gold all over the village, and we thought of the lines by Dryden—

> "In the sun your golden grain display,
> And thrash it out and winnow it by day."

There was a terrible row in the village that evening, and, on inquiring the cause, I learnt that coolies were wanted to carry Syad Yacoob's ammunition up to Lé. There were four hundred loads, and as this was being sent up at the Maharajah's expense, of course the coolies were paid nothing at all. The villagers were being pressed into the service, and as they were in the middle of their harvesting, they naturally objected to losing two or three days and getting nothing for their trouble.

However, next morning, when we started, we found the ammunition gone, so their scruples had evidently been overcome, either by fair means or foul, probably the latter.

When we reached Lamayuru we found it terribly hot, and were glad to get under shelter of the few trees there. We missed the greasy, good-humoured Lamas, who, it seemed, had all gone away to help the villagers in their harvesting in the country round about. The way they

help the people is just sitting down and spinning their prayer-wheels; they watch the villagers harvesting, and then beg a sack or two of corn for their trouble, by which means they lay in a good stock for the winter.

It was very hot till we got to Kargil; the Valley of Paskyan, with the old polo-ground, looked prettier than ever.

Two days after we got to Dras, and next morning left for Cashmere. There was a heavy storm in the morning, so that we did not start till past ten o'clock.

Before we were well out of sight of Dras we began to notice a pleasant change in the aspect of the country and as we advanced up the valley towards the Zoji La Pass, the hill-sides became greener; here and there we saw a tree and a flower, till at last we came to as lovely a piece of scenery as can be imagined.

It were vain for me to attempt to give any idea of the beauty of this scene: a large valley, out of which run other narrower valleys; at the bottom the river was tumbling over broken masses of rock, and surrounded by shrubs and plants; mosses and ferns hanging over the stream itself, and sometimes bathing themselves in the current; the green sweeps of surrounding hills; and above all, the glaciers and snows of the great mountain-barrier between Cashmere and Ladâk—between the Desert of Central Asia and the Garden of Eden.

As we advanced through this valley, finding fresh flowers and treasures at every step, we thought we had

never seen such a garden; and yet a few days afterwards, on talking over it, we came to the conclusion that it was rather bare of flowers in comparison with the Scind Valley. It was simply that, after seeing nothing but sand and rocks for seven weeks, and then suddenly finding ourselves among green hills, trees, and flowers, we appreciated the change accordingly.

We camped just at the foot of the pass, which I should call a double pass, for on proceeding next morning we found the first pass just above us, consisting of a "Marg," or mountain meadow, on which were numbers of horses grazing. There were glaciers on either side of this little patch of green, and in the centre a small pond, from which the water flowed out at either end, one stream going away by the road we had come, making its way gradually into the land of sand, the other being the source of the Scind river, which flows through the valley and falls into the Jhelam.

We then crossed a glacier covered with snow, and got on to a path along the rocky side of the mountain. Below us was a very deep gorge, down which thundered the river Scind. The path led us up till at last we came out on a spur of the mountain and found the Scind Valley at our feet. The sudden transition from rocks and snow to green hills and pine-forests is most wonderful. I believe the height of this pass is 11,300 feet, so that one looks down several thousand feet from this point to the Scind Valley below.

A tedious winding path led down the mountain-side, and then a pleasant walk of about ten miles, through two or three pine-woods, brought us to Sonamarg. This is a beautiful mountain meadow, surrounded on all sides by mountains, the sides of which are covered with dense pine-forests or thick jungle, and the tops capped with snow; two or three splendid glaciers come right down from the mountain tops through the pine-woods into the meadows. The valley itself is divided into lesser vales by grassy knolls, on most of which are clumps of trees, and the whole ground is carpeted with flowers.

Sonamarg is one of the Cashmere sanitariums, where many of the visitors, together with the British Commissioner and the doctor, usually take their camps during the months of July and August, when they are only too glad to change the hot and sometimes malarious weather to be found round Srinagar for the cold bracing air of the "Golden Meadow."

Here the visitors pitch their camps on the knolls among the trees, and during the day amuse themselves with picnics in the woods, cricket-matches, badminton, and an occasional bear-drive. A handsome wooden church was just being finished when I was there, and the Commissioner and doctor had wooden houses to live in. Probably, in a year or two, there will be quite an English model village there during the summer months, and it would be very hard to find a more beautiful spot.

We found Barclay and Cresswell camping here, and settled with them to go on towards Srinagar next day; but it rained so hard that we did not start till the following morning. It was a perfect day, and I was very anxious that Barclay, whom we found in bed complaining of rheumatic pains, should get up and come with us; but he said he would rather rest and try and get rid of his pains that day, and would follow us as soon as possible. It was now the end of August, and was very cold at night, in addition to which it had been raining for three days; the tents were wet through, and consequently he had little chance of shaking off rheumatism while he stayed there.

Sonamarg is between 8000 and 9000 feet above the sea; so, of course, it was much colder there than down in the Valley of Cashmere.

Cresswell stayed with him, and said he would make him come down the valley next day.

When one looks round Sonamarg, it is very hard to say where the river runs out of the valley; but Lydekker and I found the outlet in the south-west corner, through a narrow gorge, the rocky sides of which towered away perpendicularly to the clouds. When the valley began to open a little, we found the path led us over smooth turf through banks of flowers six feet high: red balsams, yellow balsams, pink mallows, blue monk's-cowl, white gilda rose, and thousands of others; now under glorious walnut-trees, now through circular beds of red shumack,

surrounded by yellow balsams, as perfect beds and borders as if they had been planted by an English gardener. The hill-sides were covered with pine-forests and jungle; above them again the snow and ice; the river roared and tumbled over the rocks by our side—the whole scene was a mixture of all the beautiful countries of Europe.

We walked about twenty miles to Goond that day, and on the following, a beautiful walk through fields of rice and millet and Indian corn, and under walnut, apple, pear, peach and other trees, of about six and twenty miles, brought us to Ganderbal, where we found our boat awaiting us. As we got near the bottom of the Scind Valley, we could see chenar-trees, dark green giants, towering above the other trees all over the valley; and the place where our boat was lying was overshadowed by some of the largest chenars I saw anywhere in Cashmere.

The next morning, early, we found ourselves entering the old part of Srinagar by a canal, up which, in some places, there was only just room for our boat to get along. We passed under some curious old stone bridges, one of which was so low that we stuck fast, and wasted nearly half an hour in getting underneath it. The canal led us into the Dal Lake, which seemed to be covered with lotus and water-lilies of the hugest size and brightest colour.

Finding the Chenar Bagh, where we camped before,

very damp, we pitched our tents in a little quince orchard in the Harri Singh Bagh, and having got our letters and papers, we entered on a period of rest after our little walk.

CHAPTER XI.

AT SRINAGAR.

This is Paradise!—The Chenar Bagh—A Review—The Zoological Gardens—The Shalimar Gardens—Illness—The Feast of Roses—Fleas.

N.B.—This is Paradise!

Such is the paragraph I find in my diary about the 25th of August: by which I evidently meant to express my feelings of satisfaction.

I can conceive nothing more pleasant than this: after walking hard for four months, part of the time over snow, wearied by the continual sinking of one's feet and blinded by the terrible glare; part of the time climbing steep and slippery rocks, one's nerves strung to their highest tension by the thought that a false step or a loose stone might at any moment hurl one into eternity; part of the time trudging over sand and gravel, the hot wind in the middle of the day almost scorching one's face as it meets it—after four months of this, I say, I can conceive nothing more pleasant than to come to

a place like Srinagar, where you may divide your time between sitting in an easy, under the shade of the great chenar-trees, sipping claret-cup and reading news from home, and lying on soft cushions in a flat-bottomed boat, while you are paddled gently and noiselessly through the most beautiful place in the world.

One evening we went to dine with some friends who had camped at the north side of the Tacht-i-Suliman, a beautiful spot on the edge of the Dal Lake. They had a pretty camp under some grand chenars, and lying in front of them were two yachts and a sculling-boat, belonging to a French gentleman, the only resident at Srinagar, who drew out the lines and got the boats built there. Across the lake is a large ruin standing on the side of the mountains; it is called the Peri Mahal. I remember, when I asked Suddick who lived there, he said, "The women who live in him wood and who him never see." I wondered over this for some time, and then I found he meant fairies. It is the fairy palace. Coming back from dinner by moonlight was charming; the boatmen were in the highest spirits, and sang songs without ceasing.

On the following day we moved our tents to the Chenar Bagh, where we were joined by our friends from the Dal Lake, and in the afternoon we all went to see the parade of the troops.

I suppose the Maharajah's army numbers about fifteen thousand men, including a handful of cavalry and a few

guns. The cavalry looked tolerably nice as they walked by; but when they came at the double they were all over the place. The infantry were mostly dressed in white, with white helmets with brass spikes; but there was one regiment all in brown, with apparently brown bear-skin helmets. They use the English words of command. The commander-in-chief, who reviewed them, was such a very stout old gentleman that he could not get on his horse, so he walked about while his gallant steed was led behind him. I remember somebody told me that the officers were nearly all relatives of the Maharajah, and when there was any fighting to be done, they sent their servants to see how things were going on, while they stayed at home themselves. But the most amusing part of the afternoon's performance was the charmingly simple manner in which the army, as soon as they were dismissed, sat down on the ground and took off their trousers and boots, rolled them carefully up under their arms, and trudged home barefooted. They hate wearing European shoes, and they take their trousers off to keep them clean for next time.

Having complimented the stout old gentleman on the excellence of his troops, etc., we returned to the Chenar Bagh.

I was not surprised, a day or two after, when a friend asked me if I had seen the Zoological Gardens. Being in the very centre of glorious hunting grounds, with every facility for making a good collection of animals,

I naturally supposed that such a garden would exist at Srinagar, and not only that, but that it would be by no means of an inferior description. Without taking into consideration presents from other countries, were not the hills all round teeming with bears—red bears and black bears—leopards, jackals, foxes, ibex, barasing, markhor, gooral, musk-deer, shapoo, surroo, marmots, martins, and flying squirrels? And for birds, were there not pheasants, the monál, the argus, and the snow-pheasant, partridges and grouse of various kinds, woodcock, plover, quail and snipe; and on the Woolar Lake, swans, black and white geese, ducks, teal, herons, and thousands of other birds?

No other place in the world has such an opportunity for studying zoology; and thus ruminating, I went with my friend to see the gardens. On the way he said, "It is some years since I visited these gardens, and if they are now kept up as they were then, I have no doubt you will be immensely delighted with them;" and as he spoke, I noticed a twinkle in his left eye which seemed to denote that he spoke "sarkastikul." However, I said nothing, and we proceeded. On arriving at the entrance, we noticed they were erecting new buildings on each side of the gateway. "These are for the staff," thought I. At the door were two soldiers on guard. "They must put great value on their collection," again thought I. Inside the gate we found what was originally perhaps intended for a garden, with a few solemn-looking flowers,

growing under protest apparently; the gardener had evidently been away for the last six months. "No doubt," I thought, "everybody's attention is so fully engrossed by the animals, that they have no time to waste on the appearance of the garden." At the end of the path leading from the gateway was a round building divided into compartments. Now for the beasts; but as we approached, I perceived the cages nearest to us were empty, and on walking round the building, we found the other cages also unoccupied. "Strange!" thought I. "Is this collection a myth?" But, no! There is a bear! and not only a bear, but two bears, black ones, each at the end of a four-foot chain. The largest one was about as big as a Newfoundland dog who had had nothing to eat for a month, and the smaller one was, as it were, a pup of the larger, similar in all respects, size excepted. On asking a solitary attendant, whom we came across soon after, how and when these bears were fed, we received as an answer, in sulky Hindustanee, what would probably be, in sulky English, "I takes him round the garden sometimes, and he picks up what he can." Poor beast!

Near the bears were four monkeys in the same wretched plight, with nothing to eat, and with no shelter from cold or wet. And now we came to a second round building, but not unoccupied. In the cage nearest to us were two or three miserable rabbits; above them a few pigeons. Next door were a few partridges, and in the

cage above them were two specimens of native stuffing: an ibex and a cheetah, who had doubtless fallen victims to the stingy brutality of the Maharajah's Zoological Gardens. But the mode of stuffing was truly ludicrous. They were both done in the same manner, but take the cheetah for choice. He had been stuffed as full as possible with straw, which protruded from his mouth, nose, eyes, and ears. He had been sewn up with a large-sized packing needle, and a piece of clothes-line; and to make his legs look natural, they had stuffed them with long pieces of wood, which stuck stiffly out a few inches beyond the skin of the leg.

Originally he might have been in a standing posture, but he had evidently got tired, or else ashamed of his attitude, and had gradually sunk down till his legs stuck out on each side as if he were learning to swim. The ibex looked much the same, except that he was quite done up, and had fallen down on his side with his legs all sticking stiffly out from him.

The only other inhabitant of these gardens was a barasing or stag, and he, poor beast, was positively kept in a cage so small and so low that he neither had room to stand upright nor even to roll on the ground.

And this was the Maharajah's Zoological Gardens!

I need scarcely say I went away disgusted beyond measure at the imbecile brutality of those who are responsible for this disgraceful exhibition.

On our return to the river, we heard there was going

to be a game of polo, so off we went to try and borrow ponies. Some of the men there had ridden their ponies up from India, and some had bought ponies in Cashmere; but as I preferred walking everywhere to riding, I had to borrow. The polo-ground is close to the river, below the new banqueting-hall that the Maharajah has lately built; it is a splendid piece of ground, and we had two or three excellent games while we were at Srinagar.

The best known, and at the same time the most beautiful, relic of the past grandeur of Cashmere, is the Shalimar Garden. This place was made by the great Mogul Emperor Jehan Gir, and here the Court used to pass a great deal of its time in feasting and song.

> "The Imperial Selim held a feast
> In his magnificent Shalimar."

By the courtesy of the Maharajah, visitors are permitted to make use of the Shalimar Gardens for the purposes of balls, dinners, or other kinds of parties, and as the real way to enjoy this beautiful place is to visit it after nightfall, when its fountains are playing and it is illuminated by thousands of lamps, we determined to make up a party and go out there to dinner.

Accordingly, all necessary arrangements having been made by Suddick, a party of eight of us left Srinagar in a large boat one afternoon, and were paddled pleasantly and quietly down to Shalimar. The journey itself was not the least pleasant part of the entertainment; for one might be easily worse off than lying on

rugs and cushions in a large flat-bottomed boat, with seven other congenial spirits, smoking the sweet manilla and drinking claret-cup; and the road we traversed was very lovely. Leaving our camp in the Chenar Bagh, we went slowly up the Apple-tree Canal, and though the Drogjun, or water-gate, which separates the canal from the Dal Lake.

On this Dal Lake are numerous floating gardens. A great part of the lake is covered with aquatic plants, of which the lotus makes most show. These plants, becoming interlaced in a most extraordinary manner, a good firm patch is chosen, the roots of which are then cut, some distance down from the water. The top then presents a kind of matted screen floating on the water; this is covered with earth, which sinks in among the roots and forms the screen into a kind of floating bed, in which melons and cucumbers are reared to great perfection.

Passing these floating gardens, we soon came in sight of the Nasseeb Bagh, a splendid grove of chenars on the northern bank of the lake. On the opposite side of the lake is another grand old pleasure garden, something like the Shalimar; it is called the Nishat Bagh, and between the two is an island called the Char Chenar.

> "When the water-falls gleam like a quick fall of stars,
> And the nightingale's hymn from the Isle of Chenars
> Is broken by laughs and light echoes of feet
> From the cool, shining walks where the young people meet."

The echoes have died away, and the nightingale's hymn is unbroken, save by a burst of laughter from a party of English sahibs coming home from dinner at Shalimar. A little way further and we arrived at the entrance of the Shalimar Bagh. The garden is connected with the lake by means of a long canal, up which our boat proceeded. On each side of us are green banks and beautiful walks under grand old trees.

At length we came to the end of the canal, and getting out of our boat, we walked through an old doorway in the Shalimar Gardens. There are four terraces, nearly alike, one above the other, and we are in the lowest. Through the centre of each flows a stream of water, in a marble tank, falling in a pretty cascade from one terrace to the next; all these tanks are filled with fountains.

The highest terrace was formerly the grand one, and was only used by the ladies of the Court; there is a wall all round it, and it is raised considerably above the others. A door and a flight of steps lead us from the third terrace to the fourth. At the upper end of this terrace is a marble pavilion, surrounded by stone tanks filled with fountains, and on the upper side, the stream which fills all these tanks flows out of the garden above, falling in a beautiful cascade into the northern tank.

In this pavilion we found our dinner prepared, and

after we had finished we witnessed the illumination of the gardens. All the fountains were playing, and the terraces and pavilions were all marked out by rows of little oil lamps. Under the cascades there were niches in the wall in which these little lamps were put, and the effect of the light shining through the falling water was quite lovely.

When we were tired of looking at the beautiful gardens, we threw ourselves down on rugs and cushions in the marble pavilions and witnessed a nautch, the inevitable "finale" to a Cashmere dinner.

It is not worth while attempting to describe a nautch; for my part I think it is the slowest and stupidest performance one can possibly witness, and when I had seen one, out of curiosity, I never wanted to see another. The natives, however, would sit and look at it for ever, I believe. Indeed, I know they often last for ten hours; it must become slightly monotonous, I should fancy. The pleasantest part was coming home through the cool night air, after the heat and glare of the oil lamps and the odour of the natives, who came out in crowds to see their favourite nautch given before the English sahibs.

On the sixth of September I heard that Barclay was so ill that he was not expected to live, and that he was to be moved from Sonamarg at all risks. This was a terrible blow to us, as we had no idea that he was ill. However, I started off the first thing next morning and

met him at Guggangair, about fifty-five miles from Srinagar, and was delighted to find that he was improving hourly. He was suffering from rheumatic fever, which gradually disappeared as he descended lower and lower into the Valley of Cashmere. I had a terribly wet ride up to Guggangair, but had no time to catch cold, as I had sent on for ponies to be ready every ten miles, and so only had to change the saddle and gallop on. Coming back again, the weather was glorious, and the sun so hot that the day we got to Ganderbal, the eleventh of September, I fell off my pony from the effect of a slight sunstroke.

From Ganderbal I rode across the rice fields to the Nasseeb Bagh, where I found some friends preparing for dinner. It was the day of the great Mussulman fête.

> "With quicker spread each heart uncloses,
> And all is ecstacy—for now
> The Valley holds its Feast of Roses."

I had no time to stay and see what the fête consisted in, but I believe the people simply row about in boats, and occasionally pelt each other with roses.

After a short rest, I got into my boat and was skilfully paddled down the lake to Srinagar, through crowds of people in boats of all sizes—singing, smoking, and drinking tea. The fun had not begun, it being only about three o'clock, but I could fancy the scene in the evening.

"The sounds from the Lake; the low whispering in boats
As they shoot through the moonlight; the dipping of oars,
And the wild, airy warbling that everywhere floats,
Through the groves, round the islands, as if all the shores,
Like those of Kathay, utter'd music, and gave
An answer in song to the kiss of each wave!"

Barclay improved rapidly under careful treatment and kind nursing; the only drawback to his quick recovery was the difficulty he had in getting a good night's rest. All the bungalows at Srinagar swarm with rats and mice, which scamper about at night utterly disregarding missiles thrown at them, a constant supply of which we had always at hand. And then the fleas! One night when I was sitting up with him I caught sixty-seven. I put them in a cup of boiling water and counted the corpses next morning.

CHAPTER XII.

AMONG THE BLACK BEARS.

Ague—Hânking Bears—The Black Bear—An Anecdote—Shooting by Moonlight—Surrounded by Bears—An Annoying Bear—Monál Pheasants—Another Glorious View—Monkeys.

After ten days at Srinagar, Barclay was so much better that Cresswell and Lydekker, who had been most indefatigable in their attention to him, went off on another shooting expedition, and after another two days, during which I took Barclay out in the boat, I left him, to try and find Cresswell, whom I wanted to see on business.

I went back to Bandipore, but the weather being very warm, I foolishly slept in the boat, without putting the "chics" down, and consequently caught a terrible cold which brought on fever and ague. I dosed myself with quinine and tried to shake it off, but after one bear-drive, and a night in a tree waiting for a leopard who had killed a pony of mine, I was obliged to return to Srinagar and interview the doctor.

I don't think I have mentioned bear-driving before,

so I will explain it now. They call it "hânking" bears. You find a piece of cover, thick jungle and bushes, and take up your position at the end; of course, it is best to beat a piece on a hillside, so that you may be above the game. The beaters, consisting of coolies with tin pots and pans, then enter the cover in a line, making as much noise as possible; the bears, of course, bolt from the noise and come out at the upper end of the cover, where you are waiting to receive them. If you don't stop them at once, they will sometimes charge straight at you; but then their judgment errs, for just as they get about ten yards from you they stand up on their hind legs—I suppose preparing for a hug—but unfortunately for them, they have a large white kind of horse-shoe mark on their chests, which makes an excellent target, and it is very much a man's own fault if he does not hit the bull's-eye. I am speaking now of the black bear of Cashmere, who is not such a gentleman as the red bear. He will not attack you if he can possibly get away, but if you do happen to come to close quarters, he is a very awkward customer. He is a terrible thief, and comes down at night from the hills and ravages the fields of Indian corn. When the mulberries and walnuts are ripe, the trees will be stripped in a night or two, unless the villagers sit up to watch and frighten them away.

These black bears have very thick skulls, and I was told a true story by an officer in the Horse Artillery, of

an adventure which he enjoyed with a thick-headed bear. He was out shooting one day when he came across a black bear, and aiming straight at his head, he knocked him over. Then, as his wife, who was travelling with him, had expressed a wish to see a bear before it was skinned, he sat down, with a shikaree, close to the bear, while the other man went off to the village to get some men to carry the bear to their camp. He was just about to light his pipe, when he saw his shikaree suddenly start up with his mouth wide open, and a look of horror all over his face. He turned round to see what was the matter, and beheld the dead bear sitting up within two yards of him, rolling his head to and fro and looking very sorry for himself. In a moment he reached out his hand, seized his rifle, and without putting it up to his shoulder, gave him the remaining barrel straight at his head. Over toppled the bear, and he put his rifle down without reloading it, and was laughing heartily over the joke, when up started the shikaree again. He looked round, and there was the twice dead bear making off as fast as he could into the jungle. Before he had time to load his rifle the bear had disappeared, and he never saw him again. He had both times fired at the side of the bear's head, and the bullet had simply glanced off the thickest part of the skull.

The other mode of shooting black bears is by going out at night when it is moonlight, and catching them up mulberry or walnut trees; that is great sport some-

times, as two or three are generally found up one tree; and if you shoot at one, the others come rushing down the tree at such a pace that you have to be very sharp sometimes to get out of the way.

After "hanking" bears for two days, I moved my tent up to Tragbal, that lovely little mountain valley with the frozen lake, where we camped on our way to Tilail in the beginning of May. It looked very different now; instead of snow under the pine-trees, it was thick jungle, and the little frozen lake was a small pond of rather dirty water in the midst of a green valley. During the night a pony was killed by a leopard, and so the following evening I took up my position in a tree near the carcase, and having tied a goat up to attract the leopard by his crying, I waited patiently in a couch of pine-boughs and ferns, nicely matted together in the branches by my shikarees. However, the leopard was too suspicious, and would not venture out into the moonlight, and next morning, finding myself considerably worse, I went down to Bandipore, got into a fishing-boat, and returned to Srinagar.

There I was very ill for about eight days, after which I went back again to Bandipore, and from there up a nullah to the north to a place called Shamatan.

This was a lovely place, with a grand view of the end of the valley, almost at our feet. There was a village of three houses, and I pitched my tent in the middle of a grove of walnut-trees, which the villagers

said were visited regularly every night by numbers of bears.

The first evening, about seven o'clock, my shikaree came in, put out the light, and said, "Come along, here are the bears." When I got outside my tent, I heard two of them munching walnuts quite close to me; unfortunately it was quite dark, so that there was no chance of getting a shot in the trees. However, we crept along to an open space where it seemed rather lighter, and here we found ourselves in the middle of a circle of eight, if not nine, bears, all munching away as hard as they could. Some were in the trees shaking the nuts down, and others were down below enjoying themselves. I thought I made out one moving near me, and blazed at it; a tremendous grunting ensued and then all was quiet. We cautiously went up to the place I had fired at, but could find nothing, so we sat down in the middle of this place again, and in about half-an-hour the bears returned, dropping in casually one by one, till we could count five. My shikaree and I fired together at one going past us; he got away in the jungle, but we found him next morning. I then went back to my tent to wait for the moon to appear, but this it refused to do, so we let the bears alone for that night. I woke up in the middle of the night and heard a strange dropping on the roof of my tent, could not make out what it was, so listened, and then I heard the munching going on and I knew there was a bear

up in the branches above me, dropping walnut-shells on my head. I was too comfortable to go out and send him away, so I hoped that he might not slip off the branch and tumble through the top of my tent—turned over, and went to sleep again.

The next night was darker than ever, and though I heard numbers of bears about, I could not possibly see one, and so I turned in. I tried in vain to get to sleep, for there was a horrid brute of a bear sitting up in a tree behind my tent, grunting and groaning in the most painful manner. It seemed evident to me that the nuts had disagreed with him. At last I could stand it no longer, so calling my shikaree and taking a lantern with me, I proceeded quietly to the place where the noise came from. We crept through the jungle till we got underneath a large walnut-tree, amongst the topmost branches of which was the bear, groaning in the saddest manner. I tried in vain to make him out against the sky, and then I threw the light of the bull's-eye lantern up into the tree, but still I could not see him; and apparently he could not see the light, for he went on groaning worse than ever. At length I got tired of stretching my neck by gazing vainly up in the air, and so we gathered some dried grass and made a blaze right under the tree. The groaning stopped, and then there was a rustle, and in another moment a huge black form came rushing through the branches right on the top of us. Without waiting to put my rifle

to my shoulder, I pointed it straight at the bear and pulled both triggers, and the bear dropped from a branch over us to our feet, quite dead.

As there was no chance of the moon rising for our special benefit, I left that place next day to try and get some monál pheasants. I sent a small tent to the top of the hill behind the village, and walked up there in the afternoon. I found the shikarees employed in making masks and screens for shooting monáls. The mask is made of cheetah-skin, and the screen consists of a piece of yellow cloth, with spots of black paint all over it, to represent a leopard-skin; this is stretched over two thin pieces of bamboo, placed across each other, and forms a kind of umbrella, minus its handle.

The monál pheasant frequents the tops of sometimes quite inaccessible hills; they are very shy and very wary, frequently sitting on the extreme top of a dead pine, and looking round them for an hour before they will come down to feed. The leopard, or cheetah, is very fond of trying to catch them, but finds it no easy matter. The birds are always on the look-out for this enemy, and when they see him approaching, they run backwards and forwards on the ground, chattering and screaming in extraordinary excitement, till they think he is getting too close, when off they go, flying away sometimes miles without stopping.

The natives, finding it very difficult to get monáls by fair means, at length bethought themselves of

following the leopard's plan and trying to poach them, and as I wanted some monál skins, and had only got one brace, I tried the native dodge. Finding where there were some monáls feeding, I put on the mask of leopard-skin, and holding the screen so as to cover my body, I advanced through the bushes on all fours. The monáls, fancying me one of their enemies, the leopards, commenced running about and screaming, and as soon as I got within gunshot I carefully put my gun round the corner of the screen and "potted" one. Rather unsportsmanlike behaviour, but necessary.

After breakfast we went on farther till we came to a large marmot-ground, but we positively only saw one, which I promptly bagged; the rest apparently had retired for the winter, filling the mouths of their holes in after them. In the afternoon we sighted two doe barasing, but, after waiting for an hour, no stag appeared, and we returned to camp.

At one time during that day I had another of those glorious views which are to be found in Cashmere only. I ascended to the highest point, on the ridge above Shamatan, and looking towards the north, to Astor, I saw, first, below me, a beautiful wooded valley, surrounded by bare grass slopes; beyond that, hill after hill, stretching away into distance, till the eye takes a leap from the mass of brown and green to the pure white of the great snow-fields of Astor. It looks like a huge Bernese Oberland, peaks rising up here and

there higher and higher, till the gaze becomes fascinated by three monsters, two close together, each over 20,000 feet, and the third, towering above and beyond them, is the great giant Nauga Parbat, lifting his splendid conical-shaped head through and far above the clouds, to the enormous height of 26,629 feet.

Having bagged another brace of monáls, and there being no signs of barasing, I returned to my camp at Shamatan. The bears came thicker than ever during the evening, and I got two more.

During the night I awoke and heard two frightful screams, apparently close to my tent; I jumped up and rushed out, but all was quite still, and I thought I must have been dreaming, when another scream sounded in the night air, but far away in the jungle. It was a very loud, prolonged shriek, and certainly not human, so I turned into bed again. Next morning I asked the shikarees what made that fearful noise in the night, but they said they had heard nothing. I thought it must have been a wild-cat's scream, but the villagers said they never saw one about there. We discovered soon afterwards that the marmot's skin, which had been pegged out to dry, had been torn up, the pegs being scattered all over the place. The shikarees said it had been done by a bear, but I thought the party with the scream had had something to do with it. The following morning, on my emerging from my tent, I was saluted with howls of derision from scores of monkeys, that positively

filled the trees. Suddick came to say they had stolen all the sugar, and as much bread as they could lay their hands on, and I found they had also abstracted from my tent my cartridge-belt and one of my boots.

These monkeys were small, brown, rather ancient and dissipated-looking gentlemen, with very short tails. When I went under the trees to expostulate with them on their rude behaviour, they added insult to injury by simply grinning and showering down walnuts on my head. They stayed round the camp all day, and watched us hunting for the stolen goods. We found the belt hardly injured in the least, and the boot with the heel gnawed off.

In the evening they all went off as fast as they could, and we saw them no more. The owner of the scream and the thief of the marmot-skin were accounted for.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EAST END OF THE VALLEY OF CASHMERE.

Manasbal — Pampoor — Saffron-growing — Islamabad — Sacred Fish — Martund—A View of the whole Valley—Atchibal—Farewell to Srinagar—Duck Shooting on the Woolar Lake.

As I wanted to see the other end of the Valley of Cashmere, and there seemed no chance of the barasing coming down yet, there being no signs of snow on the hills, I left Shamatan, and went down once more to Bandipore, where my boat was awaiting me. We went up the river as far as Sumbal, where, getting out of the boat, I walked across the fields to see the Manasbal Lake. This is a small but beautiful piece of water, lying right under the hills on the northern side of the valley. It perhaps looks a little bare at its southern extremity, but the northern end is lovely. On the western side of the lake is the ruin of an old pleasure garden, once the scene of grand fêtes in the time of the fair Nourmahal. There are three villages on the banks of the lake, and at the end under the mountains is a splendid grove

of chenar-trees and a good stream of water. This is the favourite camping ground of visitors to Manasbal. There is an orchard close by, in the possession of a fakir, which contains, as I have mentioned previously, the finest peaches in Cashmere.

There are some good chenars at Sumbal to camp under, and I stayed the night there. I was obliged to shoot a dog there, who would sit outside my tent and howl during the night; sticks and stones had no effect upon him, so I was obliged to try No. 10.

On arriving at Srinagar I took up my quarters at a bungalow by the river known as the Chenar Bungalow, and had considerable difficulty in keeping the rats and mice at bay.

A day or two after, I once more embarked in my boat, and proceeded up the river to see the east end of the valley. There are numerous ruins along both banks of the river, marking the sites of the old towns of Cashmere. The principal places now are Pampoor and Islamabad. The former place is famous for the cultivation of the saffron plant, and the latter for several mineral springs.

The fields where the saffron is grown extend for some distance along the right bank of the river Jhelam, and as they were just in full bloom when I was there, I had a good view of the manner of growing what forms an extensive article of commerce in India.

The saffron plant is a large dark purple crocus, with

a red or gold centre, from which the saffron is made, and which is largely used as a dye and also as an article of food. It is grown in large fields, carefully trenched, the plants being in rows about six inches apart; and when they are just ready for picking they present a most beautiful appearance.

This saffron-growing is a monopoly of the Maharajah's, and forms one of the chief sources of his income. As much as 20,000lbs. of saffron are produced in Cashmere annually.

While the plants are in blossom the fields are carefully watched by the Maharajah's soldiers, and when the saffron is ready for picking, gangs of men and women are brought in from the villages round about, guarded by the Sepoys, to prevent them pocketing any of it. The plants are then pulled up and the centres taken out and sorted, then put into bags, and weighed at the custom-house on the river before being sent down to Srinagar. I took the liberty of pulling up two or three plants and putting them in a little tin can, where they continued to blossom till I left Cashmere; by this means I always had flowers on my table at dinner-time.

Leaving Pampoor, I proceeded up the river to Awantipore, where I camped for the night. There is a grand ruin here, and it is said that this was one of the great cities of Cashmere about 1000 years ago. I had the pleasure of meeting here a Hindú gentleman in the service of the Maharajah, whose name I believe is Baboo

Ram Ju. He spoke excellent English, read a page out of an English book I had with me, and told me that he had never been out of Cashmere, but he had a great desire to visit Europe. He had taught himself English, was very fond of poetry, and said he could also speak a little French.

There were numbers of ducks up the river, and I had some good sport from the bow of my boat.

The next day I got to Kanbal, which is the landing-place for Islamabad, and is about a mile distant from that place. The only thing I saw at this place worthy of note was a dead donkey; I mention this simply because I have never yet met any one who has seen the aforesaid phenomenon. I got two ponies here, and rode with Suddick to Islamabad. There is a fine old temple here, in a grove of chenars, and several springs, the principal of which flows through the garden of the temple, in which are a number of stone tanks full of trout. These fish are held to be sacred by the Hindús; they are regularly fed, and swarmed in such numbers in the tanks that there was positively hardly room for them to turn round.

Some of the springs are quite pure and fresh, whilst others, springing out of the hillside close to them, are strongly impregnated with sulphur.

From Islamabad we rode to the ruins of Martund. These appear to be the ruins of a grand old temple enclosed in a quadrangle of columns and arches, forming

cloisters all round it. The antiquity of these ruins varies considerably, according to different writers; but they may be put down as being between 2000 and 1500 years old. They are probably among the grandest relics of the past to be found anywhere in the world.

The view from Martund is said to be the finest in Cashmere. Thence the eye wanders over fields of rice and corn, dotted with numerous villages, half hid amongst their grand trees and fruit orchards; over the river Jhelam, winding through the landscape, broadening as it goes, while a thousand silver streaks mark the mountain-streams rushing down from their homes in the hills around to swell the grander stream below; over the slopes of grass and forest, rising upward from the fields below, even to the everlasting snows, the grand and glorious barrier to the "Happy Valley." The whole valley lies, as it were, at our feet; the Garden of Eden is before us.

From Martund I rode to Bawan, where there is another spring in an old garden, and more tanks full of sacred fish. Then to Atchibal, where there is a pleasure-garden, once the favourite resort of the beautiful Nourmahal. After that, having seen enough ruins and springs, I returned to Kanbal, and the same day dropped down the river to Bijbehara, where I camped for the night near a splendid Hindú temple. I had some more duck-shooting coming along, much to the boatmen's delight, who had a rare feast that night.

There was a tremendous storm of wind during the night, in which my tent was nearly blown into the river, and in the morning I found the hills were covered with snow quite low down into the valley. I only stayed a day in Srinagar, when, having paid off my shikarees and coolies, and bid farewell to all my friends in the bazaar, I left the capital of Cashmere on my way back to India.

I stayed in my boat near the Woolar Lake for three days, to get some duck-shooting. There are numerous swamps round the great lake, and the geese were just coming down from the hills, whither they always disappear during the summer. They had only just begun to come down when I stopped on the Woolar, and were so shy that it was quite impossible to get a shot at them, except with a rifle.

I did not feel much inclined to waste my rifle cartridges on them, and so I only shot two or three and then returned to duck-shooting on the "gheels." This is capital sport. You lie down flat on your face in a very small canoe, with your gun over the bow, while a man lying on his back behind you paddles gently along with his hands. As I only had an ordinary sixteen-pin gun, and no duck-gun, I had to content myself with very small bags; but I managed to get some fifteen brace in the morning and evening.

CHAPTER XIV.

BACK TO INDIA.

Earthquakes—A Rough Road—Ferns—India—A Good Bungalow—Murree—A Dhooly—Rawul Pindi—Retrospect of Cashmere: The Country—The People—Sporting Prospects—Shikarees—Best Places for Game—Necessaries.

I LEFT Baramula on the 1st of November and walked to Ooree, over the same road we had traversed coming to Cashmere in April. It seemed a terribly long walk; it is about six and twenty miles, and if it had not been for some monkeys, who followed me for some distance in the trees, swinging from branch to branch and chattering all the time, I believe I should have had to get a pony at Ooramboo, about nine miles from Ooree. However, I got to Ooree at last, and as I had sold my tent, etc., at Srinagar, I put up in the bungalow, which I found a tolerably comfortable one.

From Ooree to Chakoti, and thence to Hatian, the road, still along the left bank of the Jhelam, is terribly rough and tiring; there seem to be endless nullahs running at right-angles to the path, and one has to

go down one side and up the other about every two miles.

Whilst on the march from Ooree to Chakoti, I felt a most unpleasant sensation, as if there were a wave coming toward me, and presently up I went in the air and then gently down again; I knew at once it was an earthquake. That was the third I had felt in ten days.

Leaving the Murree road a few miles from Hatian, I struck off to the left over an old and now almost unused path which crosses the Danna range, and is about twenty miles shorter than the road along the river by Chatar Kalas and Ghari.

It is a very steep climb, however, and hardly to be attempted unless one wishes to save a day's march. There are no bungalows on the road, and at Meira, where I had to stay at night, I put my bed in the corner of the ruin of what used to be the verandah of the old bungalow. But one is repaid for the fatigue by the beauty of the scenery and the glorious view one gets from the top of a hill between Chikar and Meira; and the path is positively smothered in ferns. One place, I remember, I walked through literally miles of maiden-hair fern, in banks higher than my head on each side of me; but though there seemed to be millions of ferns of all sorts, I did not see one that I had not found at home—but I was not hunting for them, only walking quickly through them.

From the hill above Danna, between Meira and

Kohala, one has a view over the hill-country of British India, and right at our feet is the Jhelam once more, here marking the boundary between India and Cashmere. The descent from the Danna hill to Kohala is very steep; in fact, I think the steepest path I was ever on. At the bottom is a pretty suspension bridge, crossing which I found myself once more in India, after having passed seven pleasant months in Cashmere and Ladâk. How I did enjoy the afternoon at Kohala! It is a very pretty spot, and there is a most comfortable bungalow there, with pleasant rooms, sitting-rooms, bed-rooms, bath-rooms, and a small library. There is a khánásmán, who gave me an excellent dinner and a bottle of Murree beer; in fact, it was almost like coming home, after the last six days' very rough travelling.

From Kohala it is a very pleasant walk of about twenty miles to Murree. I started early and had breakfast at Daywal, half-way, where I found an excellent bungalow with a khánsámán, who provided me with a good repast. Thence to Murree is a delightful tramp through woods of oak over a splendid road. This part of the hill-country reminded me very much of some of the prettiest spots in Scotland, and I am not surprised at the people in the plains of India hastening up to Murree when the hot weather commences. It is a large station, having a capital camping-ground, two hotels, and several European shops, where anything for a trip over the hills can be obtained. This is the favourite place for

starting to Cashmere, as it is much the easiest road up the banks of the Jhelam, and I expect in another year or two that a road will be made enabling people to drive from Murree to Srinagar.

The mail having stopped running between Murree and Rawul Pindi, I had to go on next day in a dhooly, a kind of box carried on poles by four men. The road "down country" is a broad, hard road, perfect for driving on, and the "dhooly-wallahs" shuffled along at such a pace, that I did the forty miles easily in ten hours, including a stoppage for breakfast at Tret, and another stoppage to speak to some friends at Barakas. The last part of the journey is over the Grand Trunk Road, a splendid road, with trees on each side, and apparently perfectly straight for any distance either way. I arrived at Rawul Pindi in time for dinner, and once more found myself amongst civilization and white ties.

Before I leave Cashmere, I must say another word about the country generally. As I look back to it, I find it rather hard to express an opinion on it. I was led to expect a *grand* country—by grand I mean a country of grand scenery, with grand waterfalls, grand rocks, surrounded by the grandest mountains in the world. But I do not think one can call it a grand country; the mountains rising to 16,000 and 17,000 feet round the valley sound very grand, but then one must remember that they are seen from a height of over 5,000 feet, and thereby lose a great part of their magnitude. But it is

very beautiful, there is no doubt about that. And yet I felt disappointed when I left it, and I think the reason of that feeling might be best expressed by showing once more what the country is, and what it might be.

Cashmere as it is: A country beautiful beyond all others; a country with a climate that is almost perfect, for from its greater elevation it is much cooler than the terrible plains of India, while, sheltered as it is by mountains all round, the valley itself is as warm and pleasant as the South of Europe. And if the traveller wants a colder or more bracing air, he has only to move his tent to one of the charming little valleys away up among the glaciers. He can choose his own spot: there is no one to say he is trespassing; he pitches his tent where he likes, cuts as much wood as he wants, kills anything he may see—fish, flesh, or fowl—and stays as long as he pleases.

Again, it is a country where fruit-trees grow like weeds, where there are springs of beautiful clear water on every side, where the mountain sides are covered with the richest grazing grounds, and are surmounted by forests of pine and deodar trees; a country that abounds in game of all kinds, large and small, and whose lakes and rivers teem with water-fowl and fish; and lastly, a country where, buried in the encircling hills, lies a wealth of hidden minerals.

What more could a country want to make it one of the first in the world.

And what are the people like who possess this beautiful country? I know nothing about the ruler of the place, but it is said that "the character of the king appears in the people." If so, the less I say about him the better.

The people: ignorant, dirty, superstitious, lying; ground down by a system of taxation, which is only supposed to take one-half of their hard-earned gains, but generally manages to take two-thirds.

A people whose chief commandment is, "To *do* their neighbour and not be done by him."

A people who, as Moorcroft very truly says, have a decided genius for manufactures, and a great ingenuity as mechanics, but whose transactions are always conducted in a fraudulent spirit. And as to the country, the fruit is all wild—grapes to make wine, apples and pears for cider and perry, all thrown away; even the walnut trees are for the most part so thinned by the villagers, as an easy mode of procuring food for their sheep during the winter, that three out of four trees bear no fruit. They seldom hunt game, except when it is driven down to their very doors by a hard winter.

They make good use of timber, but in some places the people prefer burning dried cattle-dung to the trouble of gathering or cutting a few sticks for their fires. And for the hidden treasures, although it is known there is iron, copper, and lead in the hills, there

are but two small iron-works in all Cashmere, to show what might be done if men only had the will.

They are, of course, very primitive in their habits; one often sees their wooden plough being dragged by an ox and a donkey, and sometimes even by a woman and a donkey. All their farm implements are of a most inferior description; this struck me at once when I saw an old woman standing in a ploughed field trying to break the clods with an old wooden mallet.

I said they were superstitious, and I think the best example of the depth of their superstition is the following: When the father of the present Maharajah Ranbeer Singh died, the priests said his soul had gone into a fish (they are great believers in the transmigration of souls). The consequence was that the Maharajah promulgated an edict forbidding any fish to be killed in Cashmere, in case some one might eat his sainted father.

Now, as fish is the staple article of food in the country, this caused no small amount of dissatisfaction among the people, and at last they openly objected to having their fish cut off from them. Thereupon the priests discovered that the late Maharajah frequented the precincts of the palace, and a new order was published, forbidding any one to fish in the river between the first and second bridges. This order is kept in force to the present day, and, I suppose, Maharajah, priests, and people are all satisfied.

As to the sporting prospects of the country, it is

not such a good field for shooting as it was a few years ago, but still there is really a large head of game to be shot there.

I was unlucky when I was out, and so, although I got some splendid bears, I shot no large ibex or markhor. There had been two very hard winters before the summer I was there, and the beasts, barasing especially, had been driven down by hunger even to the very edge of the Woolar Lake, where they were knocked on the head by the villagers.

One man I met told me that on his way up to Cashmere, over the Pir Panjal, he met two hundred large stags' heads going down to the palace at Jummoo. These were the heads of the poor beasts murdered by the Maharajah's orders during the winter before.

But it is a country where the game would get up very quickly, especially with a mild winter or two; and I have no doubt we shall hear of some large bags in Cashmere this year.

One hears, occasionally, of men hunting the ibex with dogs, and whoever first did it in Cashmere ought to be held in great abhorrence by all good sportsmen, inasmuch as he has taught the natives to do it, and consequently the ibex have been so thinned that it is exceedingly hard to get them at all now. Although barasing, ibex, and markhor are very scarce and very hard to get, there are plenty of bears to be shot, both the black bear, which is found low down, generally round

the villages, and also the red bear, which inhabits the higher regions and is often shot on the snow. Besides these, one not unfrequently comes across a leopard, and musk-deer are found in great numbers in some parts of the country.

In Ladâk the shooting is more difficult, on account of the nature of the country, and one has to go further for it. The best ground is near the Pangong Lake and Chang Chenmo, where may be found ovis ammon, yak, Tibetan antelope, shapoo or ooreál, and wild horses, in addition to ibex and markhor.

The best months for shooting in Cashmere are from the middle of March to the middle of July, and again in September, October, and November. In Ladâk one might shoot all the year round, but the winter would be the best time, as the game is driven down into the valleys by the cold, and some grand heads might be got then.

As to the birds, the pheasants are very hard indeed to get, but there are plenty of grouse and partridges, and on the lakes and rivers any amount of geese, ducks, teal, and snipe.

This shooting is confined to Cashmere; it would be hard to find any birds, except pigeons, in Ladâk. I will mention some of the best places for sport in Cashmere, but at the same I would give this little piece of advice. If the traveller engages a shikaree beforehand, on the recommendation of a friend who has shot with him

before, and therefore knows his merits, he should not take the man to any place he may fancy, but go wherever the shikaree advises, as each man knows one part of the valley better than another, that part probably being where his home is. A good shikaree will be out spying all the winter, and in the spring, when he enters some one's service, he will know exactly where to find the big heads.

If the traveller does not engage a shikaree before he reaches Cashmere, and if he wishes to go to any particular part of the country, let him find a man who has been there before and knows the country. This he can do by reading the little packet of "chits" which every man carries. If it is immaterial to him where he goes, let him choose a man from his character given by former masters, and then go with him wherever he advises. He is sure to get good sport that way.

Now as to the places to go to for sport.

Besides Tilail, which I really think is one of the best valleys in Cashmere for all kinds of game, though we were unlucky there, there is very good shooting ground in the Goor district towards Astor, that is, on the left of Goorais.

For barasing and bears, Miniemarg, to the right of the road to Goorais, is very good ground, and the Lolab Valley, to the north of Sopoor, is noted for the quantities of black bears always to be got there. At the end of the valley the Wardwan is the great shooting

ground for all kinds of game; there are numerous nullahs about there, and one of them, the Nowboog, is almost as famous as the Lolab for its black bears.

On the south side of Cashmere, the range of the Pir Panjal, though a very difficult country, is perhaps the best for "heads," and is, I believe, the only place where one is likely to get a markhor; and to get a good markhor head is the summit of a sportsman's ambition in Cashmere.

In addition to these places, fair sport may be had in the Scind Valley, while outside the Valley of Cashmere there are excellent spots for shooting in Dras, Ladâk, Bannihâl, Astor, and Kishtwar.

The traveller should provide himself with Montgomery's map of Jummoo and Cashmere, four miles to the inch; with that he can find his way anywhere. I forgot to say that if the traveller cares to vary his sport by fishing, there are mahseer to be caught in the Jhelam up to forty and fifty pounds weight.

Of course, every man has his own peculiar fancy about shooting-weapons.

I will, therefore, simply say that I used a double Express rifle, ·450 bore, by E. M. Reilly, of Oxford Street, and could not have wished for a better one. I took out three hundred brass coil cartridge-cases, with a refilling apparatus, and used the conical bullet, the hollow at the top fitted with a copper tube.

Powder, shot, and lead for bullets, can be got at almost any town in India, and also at Srinagar.

I also had with me a light sixteen pin-gun, for which I made some small bullets, though I seldom had occasion to use them.

Strong clothes, strong boots, and a good hunting knife, are the only other things I need mention as being necessary adjuncts to a sportsman's baggage.

CHAPTER XV.

CHIEFLY ABOUT JEYPORE.

Lahore—Ice Making—Delhi—Muttra—Etawah—The Transit of Venus—Agra—The Taj—Jeypore—The Residency—The City—The Public Buildings—The Tigers—Ambér—Shooting Boars—Black-Buck Shooting—Pig Sticking—Fighting Animals—I come to Grief—Return Home suddenly.

As I said at the commencement of this volume, it is not my place to enlarge upon the glories of India. Many books have been written about the cities and peoples of Hindostan, splendid descriptions have been given of the wonders of that most wonderful country, and it is not for me to give any detailed account of already well known cities. But there is one place, where I spent the pleasantest five weeks of my whole trip, which I think is not very well known, or at all events, if known, I think will bear a few more words being said about it. Therefore I will simply mention the towns I saw on my way down from Rawul Pindi, and then give a short description of the city of Jeypore.

After staying a day or two at Rawul Pindi I left in a dák van for Lahore. The distance is a hundred and

seventy miles, and I took nearly twenty-seven hours to do it, including a stoppage of about an hour and a half for dinner the first day, and an hour for breakfast next morning.

I stayed a week at Lahore, which I enjoyed exceedingly, thanks to the kindness of my host and hostess. Amongst other people I had the good fortune to meet there was Dr. Henderson, who went up to Yarkand on Sir Douglas Forsyth's first mission. Dr. Henderson is now the Governor of Lahore Jail, and I had the pleasure of dining with him there, and enjoyed a chat about Ladâk.

He has brought ice-making to a state of great perfection at Lahore, and I think that a few words concerning the greatest boon in the world, namely, ice in India, may not be out of place.

There is a large extent of open ground near the jail at Lahore, which has been converted, so to speak, into a kind of immense ice-making machine. Pits are dug in rows across this piece of ground, each about nine inches deep and a foot in diameter; into these straw is placed to the depth of about six inches, and on the top of the straw are fixed little shallow tin dishes, the tops of which are level with the ground. Early in the morning these tin dishes are filled with water, and about eight o'clock ice is found in each, varying from a quarter of an inch to an inch and a quarter in thickness. This is then brought in, pounded, and thrown into a huge pit, where it soon amalgamates and becomes a huge block of ice.

This work is done altogether by prisoners in the jail, as many as twelve hundred being sometimes let out in the morning to bring the ice in.

I believe they never attempt to escape, and consider it a great punishment not to be told off for ice duty.

The ice is made by the cold wind sweeping over the ground between the hours of six and eight in the morning. The straw placed beneath the tins keeps the heat of the ground away from them. The ice-making goes on from October to February, during which time they make sufficient to supply the wants of Lahore during the summer months. I believe the quantity of ice made yearly brings in, on an average, about £6000 to the revenue. Too much praise cannot be given to the scientific and spirited promoter of this most useful work.

From Lahore I went to Delhi, a large city strongly fortified. On the river bank is the fort containing the palace, in which are the well-known Dewan A'am, and Dewan Khass, the audience hall and council chamber; the royal baths, and the Pearl Mosque. In the middle of the city is the Jumma Musjid, the Great Mosque. There I had the infinite pleasure of beholding a Koran written by the son of Mahomet, about 1300 years old, another book by his grandson, and also a footprint of Mahomet himself in a piece of marble, very similar, I should think, to the one Mark Twain saw in the Holy Land, and of which he tersely remarked, "I should judge he wore eighteens." But what was much more interesting to me

than Mahomet's footprints, etc., was the Cashmere gate, the everlasting memorial of how we got into Delhi in 1857. But all this has been written about dozens of times before, so I will simply say that I saw all this, together with Humayon's Tomb, Safter Jung's ditto, the Observatory, and the Kootub.

From Delhi I went to Agra, and from Agra to Muttra, where I spent a most pleasant week with Colonel and Mrs. Molyneux, whom I had met before in the Tilail Valley. I found Barclay staying here, apparently quite recovered from his bad attack of fever, and we left together and went to Etawah, where we enjoyed a week in camp, with the magistrate of the district. We shot some black-buck, and saw the transit of Venus, concerning which I must tell a pleasant little anecdote. In commemoration of the event, I "blazed" a tree and carved our names on it, together with the date and event. Mrs. Lawrence's little girl, who was not up early enough to see the transit, came during the day to inquire what we were doing, and was so much impressed at what she saw, that when she arrived in England the summer before last, one of the first things she said to her young cousin was this, in a tone of immense triumph, "Ah! I saw the transit of Venus! Mr. Lambert did it on a tree!"

From Etawah, we went once more to Agra, where we spent two days looking at the fort and the Taj.

The Taj has been so often written about, that there

is no need for me to tell what it is; but I must say that it is by far the most perfectly beautiful building I have ever seen. I saw it when the sun rose upon it and bathed it in the early morning light; I saw it steeped in the fierce light of a mid-day sun; I saw it swimming in the glow of a crimson sunset; I saw it once more, standing up pale and glistening, weird and wonderful, in the cold light of a December moon;—and whenever I gazed upon it, it always seemed to me as a wonderful, beautiful dream.

From Agra a new line had just been opened as far as Jeypore. This line is called the Rajpootana State Railway. I don't wish to say anything harsh or disagreeable about the State railways, but one cannot help thinking there must be something wrong somewhere, when a train takes fifteen hours and a half to do a hundred and forty-four miles. However, on this occasion two engines broke down, and we had to wait for a third; that made us rather late, and we got breakfast half-way at 5 p.m. Finally, we arrived in Jeypore to dinner at 10.30 p.m.

The Residency, where we were guests of the Political Agent and his wife, is a most charming house. The original part was a palace of one of the queen mothers, but it has been added to from time to time, till at length it has become a very handsome, roomy building. The grounds round the house are very extensive, and beautifully kept up, the badminton lawn being certainly the

prettiest I saw anywhere. Oranges grow in the greatest abundance, and the roses were as good as any we have at home.

About a hundred and sixty years ago the Maharajah Jey Singh found that the population in his city of Ambér was increasing so rapidly that the city must be promptly enlarged. But here a difficulty arose. Ambér was built in a valley entirely surrounded by hills, which were strongly fortified all along their summits. The little valley was full, there was no more room to build, and, as it was, they were a great deal too much crowded, and so the Maharajah determined to build a new city in the plain outside.

The whole city was evidently built from the designs and probably under the superintendence of one man. The houses in the main street are nearly all only two stories high. The lower story is a shop open to the street; above this is a ledge running along the whole street, and over this again is a screen of ornamental stone lattice-work. This main street is about forty yards wide; it is quite straight, and over two miles in length. At right-angles to it, and nearly bisecting it, is another street of the same width, over a mile in length; and a third street runs parallel to the last one, nearly two miles in length. The other streets are much narrower, but they are far cleaner, than those in any other town in India. In the cross streets the houses are generally higher than those in the main streets. The outsides

are plaster, painted in the most extraordinary manner. Each street is a different colour, the main street being painted mauve, others green, pink, light-blue, chocolate, grey, etc.

Some of the houses have frescoes on their exterior walls that look very like copies from pictures in English newspapers. The whole appearance of the city is quaint in the extreme.

The palace is very large, and occupies about a fifth part of the city; the gardens are beautifully laid out, and there is a lake on which the Maharajah has a small paddle steamer. The stables are exceedingly well arranged; the stud numbers over seven hundred horses and eighty elephants.

In the city is a large college, two schools, an ophthalmic hospital, a museum, and other public buildings, and just outside the city wall is a large handsome hospital built to the memory of Lord Mayo. This hospital is in the corner of the Public Garden, which is being laid out with great taste, and already includes a small menagerie, an aviary, a deer-park, a cricket-ground, and other attractions. All these things tend to show that Jeypore thrives exceedingly under the dominion of one of the most enlightened and liberal princes of India.

The day after we arrived, we drove round the city and gardens and visited the Maharajah's tigers. I have seen a good many tigers in cages before, but such

splendid, savage fellows as these I never met with. The cages were built up on a stone platform at the end of a street and in the middle of the city. There were six tigers and two cheetahs when I was there. Two of the tigers, whose powers were evidently well known, had double bars to their cages; and I felt my blood run cold as they dashed at the bars in their vain efforts to get out, and their warm breath on my face when I went rather too close to them almost turned me sick.

The deserted city of Ambér is about seven miles from Jeypore, and the next day we went over to see it. Leaving the city by the north gate, we covered the first four miles in a carriage and four. The road was about a foot deep in sand, and the horses went at a gallop the whole way; we passed some ruined gardens, and a lake, on the shores of which numerous alligators lay basking in the sun. We left the carriages at the foot of a rather steep stone causeway, and there mounted elephants, which were in waiting for us. At the top of the causeway we passed through a double gate in the fortified wall which surrounds Ambér, and, descending a rougher causeway the other side, found ourselves entering a departed city.

I think that place struck me as one of the most extraordinary I had ever seen. The houses were not absolutely in ruins: they only want a little "doing up" to be quite habitable again; but the horrible stillness seemed to suggest that we were indeed moving among

the departed. What made it more solemn was the noiseless manner in which the elephants stalked along, as though they knew we were trespassing amongst the memorials of the past.

At our feet was a lake, with a garden raised on stonework in the middle of it, and from its opposite bank rose a steep mass of rock, on which stands the old Palace of Ambér. It is a grand old building; a great heap of stonework, with its huge gateway, its battlements and towers, its balconies and loopholes. A winding path leads up the hill and passes through three gateways in a fortified wall, and then through a large double gate into a courtyard. A flight of stone steps takes one into another court, on one side of which, raised about three feet from the floor, is the Dewan A'am. The roof of this building is raised on marble pillars, which have been covered over with plaster. The reason of this was, that some years ago the king of a neighbouring State, hearing that there were some beautiful carved pillars at Ambér, and being a man who was accustomed to break the Tenth Commandment pretty frequently, sent a small army to carry off these said pillars. The ruler of Ambér, considering discretion the better part of valour, promptly plastered the pillars over. When the other gentleman arrived, he found, to his great disgust, that the beautiful marble pillars were only common plaster ones after all, so he apologized for intruding and gracefully retired. One of the pillars has been dug out of its plaster to prove

the truth of this story, the others remain in obscurity. A few steps from this court into a passage, and a small door introduces one into the private part of the palace, with a lovely little hall, the roof and sides of which are mosaic in glass; outside is an orange grove, and there I tasted the finest oranges mortal man could desire.

Beyond this part of the palace a narrow passage, with a strong door at each end, led one into the seraglio, which was quite as large as the rest of the palace, and one of the most confusing places to walk about I ever was in. There is only one staircase from the garden to the apartments, which are all built on the first floor, and each set is so separated from the next as to make it quite a matter of wonder how the ladies of the harem managed to meet in the garden at all.

We dined in the "Shish Mahal," or Palace of Glass; and Barclay and I had beds put up in the old council hall. I shall never forget the view from the balcony of the Dewan Khass that night. We sat out there smoking, and the deserted city, with its lake and garden, lay beneath us, bathed in the light of a glorious moon.

The next morning we went out, at the Maharajah's request, to shoot some wild boars which were rooting up the scanty crops grown by the few priests and people who still stick to the old place. We had great fun, as we got a large herd on to a hill-side among a lot of cactus bushes, and then we climbed on rocks, and the

natives hunted them out with spears and stones, while we shot them as they galloped along among the cacti. It was very pretty shooting, and we managed to bag six before breakfast. The best fun was when one charged in among the beaters; that is the time to see a native's agility. They jumped the cactus bushes, and jumped so high that they might have cleared a house if it had been there; and sometimes they came to grief and went head first into a great prickly shrub. I don't think I ever laughed so much before breakfast in my life.

After breakfast we all played badminton in the great court, and in the afternoon returned to the Residency.

Our usual way of spending the day during this Christmas time was to go out after black-buck, or sometimes to go pig-sticking in the morning, and to play badminton in the afternoon.

The black-buck are preserved for six miles round Jeypore, by the Maharajah's orders, so that we had splendid shooting, and I got some very good heads. For pig-sticking it is a glorious country, though rather blind. The pigs are very numerous, and come down from the hills to the north of Jeypore during the night, and ravage the fields round the city. We used to go out about 4 a.m., and, riding parallel to the hills, used to catch them going back home after their dark night's work. We had some splendid runs, using nine-foot spears, and, as the ground was full of holes, and traversed by endless nullahs, there were plenty of falls.

The worst pitfalls in that country are what they call dry wells. These places in the ground formerly may have been wells, but the water has long since disappeared, and the well is gradually becoming filled up with sand. The bushes and brambles and long grass grow up round them and entirely hide them, and so it is no uncommon occurrence to see a man who is galloping hard across country to cut off a pig making for the hills suddenly disappear from sight altogether. And on being sought for, he is found, very likely, fixed, embedded in the sand, about fifteen feet below the surface of the ground. This happened once when I was out to a friend of mine, and a day or two afterwards very nearly happened to me; but luckily, or perhaps unluckily, being rather a loose rider, when my horse came to grief I stayed at the top on the further edge of a nice round hole in the ground. It was a very shallow one, and my horse scrambled out at once, while I picked myself up, feeling very sore about the left shoulder.

But we had some glorious runs. We used to ride in a line across country, and as soon as a "sounder" was on foot, we all raced after them, and then, singling out the boars, ran them to the bitter end, while the rest of the "sounder" went off grunting and squeaking in any direction they pleased.

Pigs are very fast for a distance, and if they get a good start, and happen to be in rough ground or among

nullahs, they often get right away before one can get close enough to them to keep one's eye on them. But if one can only get on terms with them, then it is splendid fun. They are very quick in turning, and dodge one round a bush or a rock in the most scientific manner. The great danger in pig-sticking is when the pig turns sharply across in front of you; then, as likely as not, down you come, horse and all, and if you don't break your neck on the spot, perhaps "piggy," being angry, will come and polish you off with his terrible sharp tusks. Again, a plucky pig, when close pressed, will turn and charge straight at you; then is the time for horse and man to show their breed. If the horse misbehaves himself, or swerves in the slightest degree, or if the rider has not got a good nerve and a steady eye, then probably the spear misses him, and piggy rips up either the horse's leg or the man's.

I have seen horses trained for pig-sticking by the natives do extraordinary things when out at Jeypore. The native throws the reins on his horse's neck, and it follows the pig about just like a dog, turning almost as quickly, and always on the look-out for squalls. I have seen a horse, when a pig has turned sharp across him, just take him in his stride as though he had been a Sussex gate. Once I saw a horse, when a pig charged straight at him, just stop dead and strike out with his fore-foot. He knocked "piggy" all over the place, and the native rider of the pugilistic Arab whacked him,

that is the pig, on the head with a club he was carrying, before he could pick himself up again.

The best morning we had we got four large boars and a hyena; the latter gave us a rattling run of thirty-five minutes, but he was a cur, and would not show fight at the end. He lay down and snarled at us, and we stirred him up with the butt end of our spears. They are most awkward-looking brutes when running, but go a tremendous pace. From what I saw and heard while I was in India, pig-sticking is *the* sport of the East.

One morning before breakfast the Maharajah's fighting animals were brought out for our delectation. It is hardly a subject on which I care to say much, but will mention that we witnessed some fine battles between two pairs of buffaloes, three pairs of black-buck, two pairs of pigs, some hog-deer, and about six pairs of rams. To show the savage nature and pluck of the wild pigs, I will mention that we saw two pigs that morning positively kill each other like the two famous Kilkenny cats.

On New Year's Day we attended the sports of the scholars of the Maharajah's college, and were greatly interested and amused. They had the usual flat races and hurdle races, long jump and high jump. The sports were followed by recitations, which were excellently given by the prize scholars. Among the pieces chosen, as far as I remember, were the court scene from "The Merchant of Venice" and "Bullum *versus* Boatum."

It would probably be most uninteresting to every one but myself if I were to attempt to give any account of our Christmas festivities, but if ever I spend another Christmas away from home, I hope it will be at Jeypore.

About a week after Christmas we had another splendid morning's pig-sticking, and while following a fine boar I came to dreadful grief over a mud wall, thereby making my sore shoulder rather sorer; and two days afterwards, finding the pain was increasing, I had it examined, and discovered I had broken the scapula. From this time I had my arm tied up and became an interesting invalid.

A few days afterwards bad news called me home, and brought my trip to an abrupt conclusion.

I have now finished my short, and I fear lame, account of my holiday in the East. I have written this, as I before remarked, from the shortest jottings of a pocket diary, and without the slightest premeditation of publishing.

I conclude by giving my best thanks to all those who either at home or abroad contributed to my enjoyment, and by advising any one who has a few months to spare to get a companion, or three, if he can find three such pleasant companions as I did, and take "A Trip to Cashmere and Ladâk."

APPENDIX.

The traveller can really get everything he wants for his trip to Cashmere at Bombay or Calcutta; but of course there are certain articles which he will get much better and cheaper at home.

I think the following list includes all he is likely to need, some of the things perhaps ranking as luxuries rather than necessaries:—

Montgomery's Map of Jummoo and Cashmere, four miles to an inch.
An aneroid barometer.
A pocket-compass.
A field-glass.
A water-proof sheet.
A water-proof Ulster.
A felt-covered water-bottle, with strap, to sling over the back.
A pocket-filter.
A small case of tools.
A small, strong leather portmanteau for clothes.
Strong shooting-boots.
A leather cartridge-box
And an Express rifle and a shot gun.

The necessaries for a camp in Cashmere, all of which may be procured at Lahore, are:—

A hill tent, or shildari, nine feet square.
Folding-table and chair.
Bedstead, which I have described before.
Brass basin, for washing, with folding stand.
Cooking pots.
Plates and dishes of enamelled iron.
Stores, such as tea, sugar, flour, rice, salt, pepper, etc.

As "liquor" takes up so much room, it is best to take only a few bottles of spirits, and to keep those for special occasions.

The water in Cashmere is so good that no one need drink anything else.

For carrying the above, the most useful things are deep baskets covered with leather, called kiltas.

The whole cost of the above camp is about £10.

Servants' wages vary very much in different places, but the following is about an average price for a good servant:—

	Rupees.
A khituragar and bearer	16 per month.
A bishtí	6 ,,
A shikaree	14 ,,
A second shikaree	10 ,,
Coolies	5 ,,
	Annas.
For carriage, coolies cost	4 a march.
,, ponies cost...	8 ,,

Coolies can be procured at any village; at the regular stages on the roads from India to Cashmere and on to Lé.

there is an official who procures not only coolies, but such supplies as the place is capable of producing, as milk, eggs, fowls, etc.

It would be somewhat difficult to estimate exactly the cost of a trip like this, but the following facts and figures may serve as a guide to the probable expense, for one person, say for six months, in Cashmere :—

	£
From London to Lahore, by P. & O., first-class, not including wine on board ... ... about	100
Cost of a camp ... ... about	10
Travelling and living in Cashmere at £10 per month ...	60
Servants' wages, 50 rupees per month	30
From Lahore to London	100
	£300

Of course, travelling about and seeing India costs a great deal more; in fact, you can spend as much as you like there. The figures I have put down above are simply showing the cost of going straight out to Cashmere, camping out there for six months, and coming straight home again.

As an itinerary of the route from Gujrat to Srinagar over the Haji Pir may be useful to the reader, it is here appended.

At Gujrat the traveller leaves the railway.

	Miles.
Gujrat to Bhimber	29 (by dhooly dâk).
Bhimber to Saidabad	15 (a hard climb).
Saidabad to Naoshera	13 (steep ascent).
Naoshera to Changas	14
Changas to Rajaori	14 (capital camping-ground outside the bungalow garden).
Rajaori to Thanna Mandi	15 (easy walk).

	Miles.
Thanna to Sooran	20 (lovely march).
Sooran to Poonch	14 (good camp-ground beyond the village).
Poonch to Aliabad	18 (bad camp-ground).
Aliabad to Ooree	18 (hard march).
Ooree to Baramula	24 (beautiful and easy march).
Baramula to Srinagar about	40 (by water).

From Srinagar to Lé:

	Miles.
Srinagar to Ganderbal	14
Ganderbal to Goond	26
Goond to Sonamarg	19
Sonamarg to Zogibal	19
Zogibal to Dras	20
Dras to Tashgam	15
Tashgam to Kargil	23
Kargil to Shergool	20
Shergool to Karbu	20
Karbu to Lamayuru	16
* Lamayuru to Kalsi	12
Kalsi to Hemyss	16
Hemyss to Basgo	18
Basgo to Lé	22

Or,

* Lamayuru to Nurla	17
Nurla to Sospul	16
Sospul to Nimu	13
Nimu to Lé	18

From Srinagar to Murree:

	Miles.
Srinagar to Baramula	40 (by water).
Baramula to Ooree	24 (easy march).
Ooree to Chakoti	16 (rough road).
Chakoti to Hatti	16 (rougher road).

	Miles.
* Hatti to Meira	1$ (hard march, and no bungalow).
Meira to Kohala	16 (rough, steep descent).

Or,

* Hatti to Tinali	22 (good road, bungalow at Ghari, half-way).
Tinali to Rara	13 (rough road).
Rara to Kohala	22 (easy march, bungalow at Chatar Kalas, half way).
Kohala to Murree	20 (lovely march, bungalow at Daywal, half-way).

207
345
552 to Murree
44 to Rindi
596

22 days from Leh to Colombo

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